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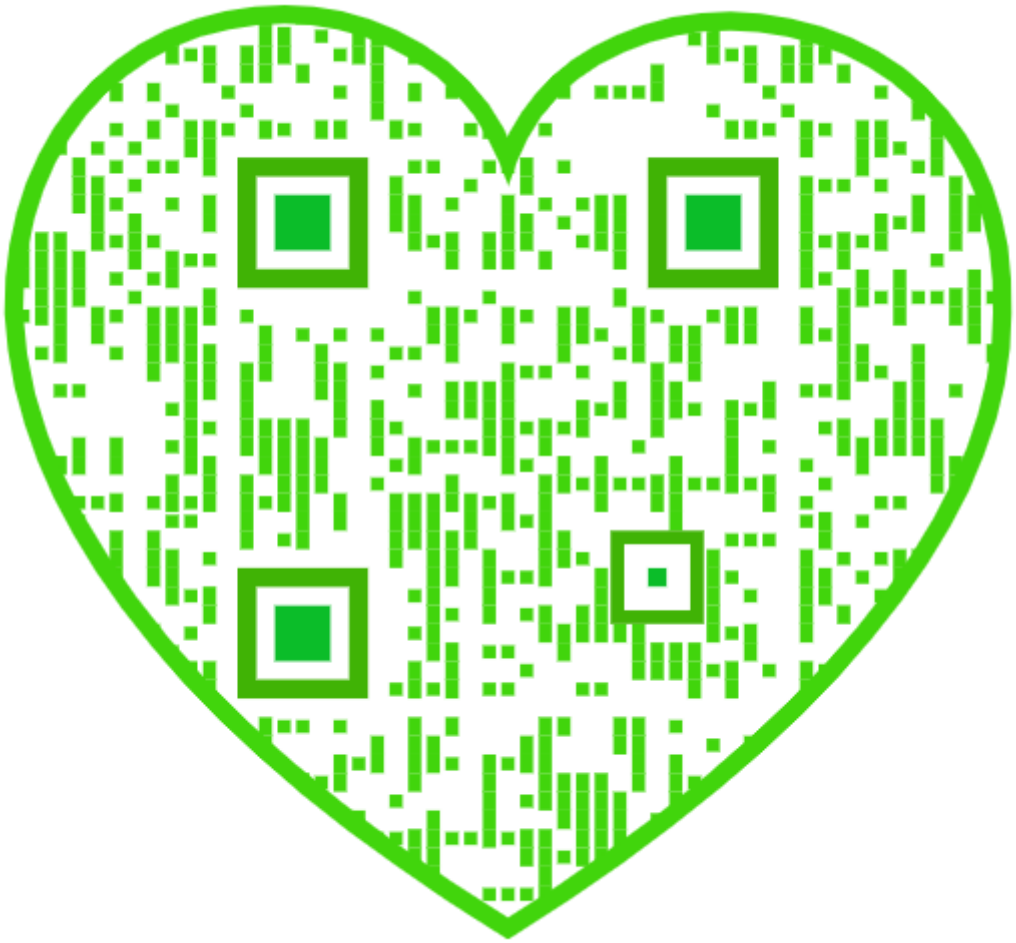

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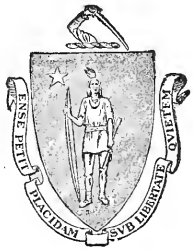

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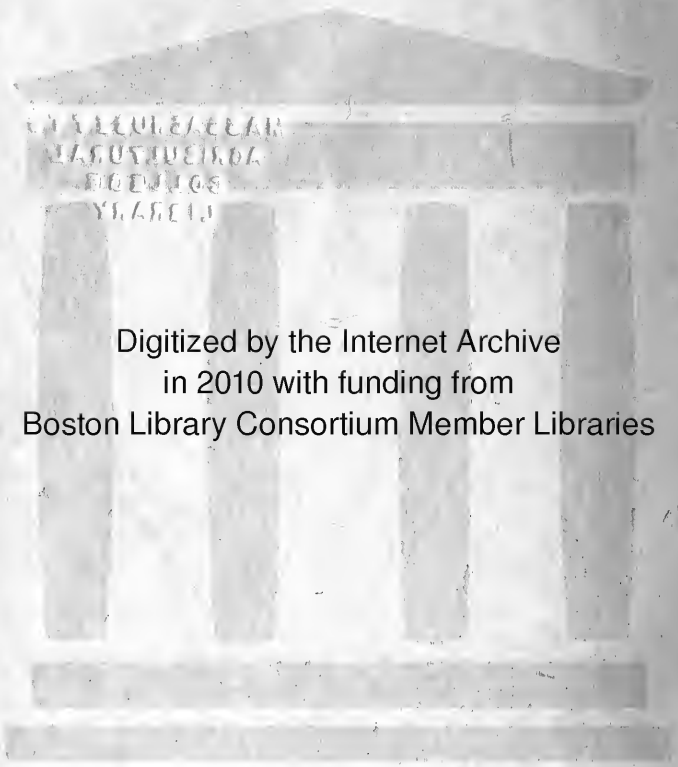

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ERRATA.

The proofreader acknowledges, with regret, the substitution of the word "John" for "Frank" in the advertisement of Mr. Frank McGrann, on page 76.

GEORGE H. NORTHUP.

Minorcas of Every Comb and Color

By GEORGE H. NORTHUP,

Secretary-Treasurer of American Black Minorca Club.

Secretary-Treasurer of Inter-National Rose Comb Black Minorca Club.

RACEVILLE, NEW YORK,

1907.

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PREFACE.

My first book on Minorcas was received with much favor by admirers of this noble breed of fowls, many complimentary things were said of it by the press and I am sure the facts it contains in regard to the Minorca fowl have been the means of bringing the excellent qualities of that breed to the favorable notice of many people who, without such a book, would not have given special attention to Minorcas. For these reasons I have felt well paid for the work of writing that book. Since then, nine years have elapsed, wonderful progress has been made in Minorca interests and recently many requests have come to me from Minorca fanciers for another book which should go further into details and follow the subject of Minorcas down to the present time. Such a book I have endeavored to make "Minorcas of Every Comb and Color." I hope it will be all that experienced breeders anticipate and desire, a help over difficulties to those admirers of Minorcas whose experience with them is limited, and a means of presenting Minorcas in their true light to people who desire a thoroughly practical breed of poultry from which the greatest possible profit can be derived.

Many thanks are due to members of the American Black Minorca club and the Inter-national Rose Comb Black Minorca Club for their untiring efforts to breed the best type of these two varieties and to the clubs, as organizations, for their part in distributing to the public such knowledge of Minorcas as their members have gained from practical experience, and interchange of ideas as to the best methods

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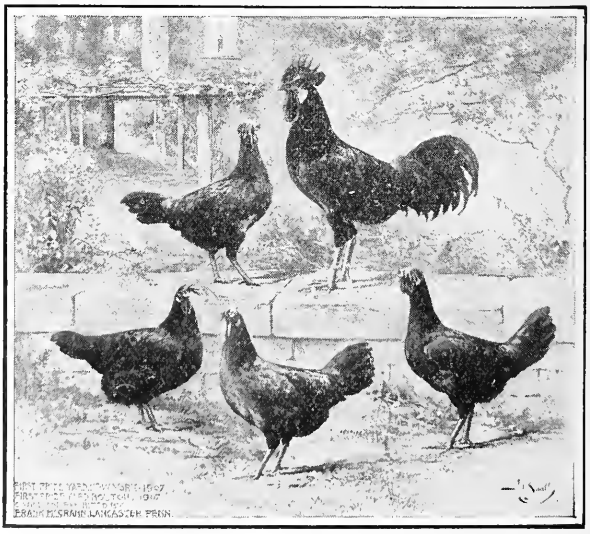
of breeding. I recommend all who are interested in Minorcas and wish to keep abreast of the times in all that pertains to the Single or Rose Comb Black Minorcas to become members of one or both clubs and take an active part in the work.

If I seem to have given the Minorca fowl too much praise in the varous articles which make up this book, let it be remembered that all has been written under the inspiring influence and in the presence of many proud representatives of the Minorca breed, to whom and their ancestors I owe much for the help they have given me in gaining ownership of my home and the small city of Minorca buildings which surround it as well as many other comforts of life which I enjoy.



Pen of Single Comb Black Minorcas. First Prize at Madison Square Garden, 1907. First Prize at Boston, 1907. Compliments of Frank McGrann, President American Black Minorca Club.

HISTORY OF MINORCAS.

The earliest Minorcas of which anything is known were the Single Comb Blacks. In writing their early history it is necessary to cull such facts as have the strongest evidence of authenticity, from much which has been reported about them.

There are indisputable records of Single Comb Black Minorcas being bred in England more than seventy years ago. These same records show conclusively that the general characteristics and appearance of Black Minorcas of that time were essentially the same as we find them in our average specimens of the present day. As long ago as we find anything reported of Minorcas their excellent laying qualities have been the remarkable feature which commended them to poultry men and fanciers wherever they were bred.

"They lay more and larger eggs than any other breed of fowls known," has been so often said of them that their very name, Minorca, has become a synonym of wonderful egg production in every clime where Minorcas have been bred in their purity. A peculiar feature of the Minorca breed and one in which it is conspicuously unique, in contrast with most all other standard breeds, is the fact that the original type has been preserved so perfectly that our best Minorcas now, those which are in greatest favor with Minorca fanciers, answer closely to the earliest descriptions of Minorcas which we can find recorded. The cause of this wonderful tenacity of type is attributed to the strong native qualities and tendencies which have always characterized Minorcas as a distinct breed. Besides, the great objects people have had in mind when breeding Minorcas, have been their hardiness and usefulness, two qualities which the breed has so well maintained as to keep it always in favor with a practical and thrifty class of breeders who had no admiration for the freaks and eccentricities in na-

ture except as curios, but who could and did appreciate the strong, well-formed and characteristic specimens of bird and animal life as the best handiwork of a wise Creator.

The name "Minorca" could not have been derived from any characteristic of the fowls to which it was given, because they are naturally a large sized fowl. It is a remarkable feature of them, as prominent as the great number and large size of their eggs, that they have much larger bodies than any other non-sitting breed of fowls. Therefore it is very probable that the tradition that they were natives of the Island of Minorca is correct, and that the name was given them because they were brought directly from that island to England. The Island of Minorca is the second largest of the Balearic group and is situated about 125 miles from the mouth of the Ebro, a river of Spain. The earliest date of importation of Minorcas to England which can be absolutely proven is 1834, but it is believed that Minorcas had been brought to England before that date, and that they came direct from the Island of Minorca.

Mr. Lewis Wright says in the Illustrated Book of Poultry: "There is more evidence than usual for the source of this breed being truly represented by its name. Mr. Leworthy told us that Mr. Willis, a friend of his, had seen them in Minorca, and the Rev. Thomas Cox, of Castle Cary, informs us on the direct authority of Sir Thomas Ackland that his father, the former Baronet, undoubtedly brought some from that island direct to England in 1834 or 1835, and kept them for years at Holnicote. It is doubtful if the fowl was not already known in the west of England, but there is no doubt but that one strain did diverge from this ascertained importation, and the breed was for years known and prized in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, before known elsewhere."

We have it from good authority that Minorcas were the progenitors of the White Faced Black Spanish. The greatest difference between the two breeds is that in breeding the Spanish for the white face they have been in-bred so much as to establish a weaker constitution,

lower vitality and smaller size. This demonstrates the advantage of keeping a good breed always at its natural best.

Minorcas were bred many years in the Southwestern part of England for purely practical purposes before any attention was given them as a specially fancy fowl, and a separate class for them in the show-room was a very unusual occurrence until a few years before they were first imported to America. But when once admitted to the show-room as a fancy breed they rapidly grew in favor with the English Fancier and have for about 30 years been among the chief attractions of English poultry shows.

It was from England that the first Minorcas were brought to America. I quote a letter from Mr. Henry Hales in which he writes of some Minorcas which were probably the first ever brought to America. The same letter was recently published in the catalogue of the American Black Minorca Club and is as follows:

"In the early seventies I heard of some Black Minorcas on Staten Island, N. Y. I went there and found a lawyer named Carey at New Brighton, who had some beautiful birds he had imported and I procured some from him. These birds were of very large size, long square bodies of very beautiful plumage, and the hens' combs, as well as the cocks', were very large, but most prominent was the green sheen of the whole plumage. I have kept an eye on Black Minorcas ever since, and I cannot see any improvement of the original stock, either in combs, size or plumage, especially of the fine green sheen which I think at the present day is only equalled in a few choice strains of this breed. In looking over the Black Minorcas from year to year, including New York and Boston show exhibits this season, I do not see that the largest are any larger than those I kept in the early seventies. The combs are not as large, especially the females. The type of the best birds is about the same, though the legs may be a trifle longer."

Henry Hales is a naturalist of considerable ability and reputation and one of our most skillful breeders. He was exhibiting Black Spanish in 1858 and 1859 and is

today one of our best Dorking breeders. The Minorcas which he speaks of seeing at New Brighton in the "early seventies" were undoubtedly allowed to lose their identity in a short time by intermixture with other breeds because we have no further account of them; and when Mrs. Cynthia Sargent, Francis Morimer, J. D. Nevius and myself began importing Black Minorcas in 1885 and 1886 they were considered an entirely **new** breed in this country and were so reported by the poultry press and poultrymen in general.

In America, Minorcas never had a boom, but the reputation which their good qualities had established for them in England was quickly reported here, and American breeders were prepared to welcome them on account of their reputed worth. So Minorcas were hardly established here before it was seen that more eggs than the first importations could produce were wanted for immediate hatching and each year found too few Minorcas to supply the growing demand. This situation was a temptation to a few unscrupulous breeders to "pad" their Black Minorca breeding pens with Black Leghorns to enable them to produce a larger number of eggs which people would buy, believing them to be the produce of pure Minorcas. It was currently reported that one man who advertised extensively as an importer of Black Minorcas, bought fifty Black Leghorn hens, yarded them with his Black Minorcas and sold eggs, for hatching, from the whole lot together as Black Minorca eggs. This deception could not be detected so easily then as the same could now, because until after the Standard was revised in 1889, "black or nearly black" legs were required for Black Leghorns and legs of any other color disqualified them. After the change in the Standard made yellow, or yellowish black, the correct color for the legs of Black Leghorns there was another influx to the Minorca ranks because the new situation afforded a new temptation to the same unscrupulous class to palm off as many black legged Black Leghorns for Black Minorcas as unsuspecting people would buy. This dastardly work, so quietly and quickly done, produced evil results, which required much time to correct, because

many people, who were deceived into buying cross-bred or falsely named fowls, thought them to be genuine Minorcas and treated them as such, breeding them and selling them as true Minorcas. Thus a strong Leghorn tendency was seen in many fowls which were called Minorcas, and while most breeders now recognize the true Minorca type, there are still some who suppose it to be a new type and think that the earlier Minorca was represented by the cross-bred specimens which I have described. But absolutely pure Minorcas of the best type were kept and bred, from the start, by some of the more sagacious and honest American breeders who appreciated the excellence of the breed and knew that if carefully preserved it would eventually win the distinction and popularity which we are realizing in the Black Minorcas of the present day. Thus unlimited effort has been made to preserve the native excellence of Minorcas, and those who made the effort deserve much credit. Such breeders, together with those who have appreciated and encouraged their work, are being repaid by greater success than anyone could have anticipated from the beginning; because from year to year Minorcas have steadily gained in favor, until today they are more popular with American poultrymen than they have been at any time since they first entered our ports.

Notwithstanding the fact that Black Minorcas have been very extensively bred throughout the United States and Canada for nearly twenty years, the demand for them has increased more rapidly than the supply, and the present indications are that it will be many years before Minorca fanciers can keep enough Minorca fowls to be able to make prompt shipments of fowls and eggs at all times. There is room for thousands more breeders to take up Minorcas and give them their whole attention and best skill before the supply will be plentiful for all who desire them. Long before the present breeding season commenced it was impossible to find a Minorca fowl for sale, every available Black Minorca hen I know of has been called into service to supply eggs for

hatching and thousands more Black Minorca eggs would have been set if they could have been produced.

Minorcas have gained importance in the show-room in the same proportion as they have in other departments of usefulness and are among the most favored breeds of fowls from the fancier's standpoint as well as for eggs and market purposes.

HARDINESS OF BLACK MINORCAS.

Next to profitable productive ability there is nothing so important in the domestic fowl or animal as natural hardiness, and the Black Minorca is physically strong and hardy. Its native strength has not been sacrificed for the sake of breeding for unnatural peculiarities, as has been the case with many varieties of fowls, but being bred always to preserve, and if possible, improve its natural vigor and productiveness, it is one of the hardiest in the whole list of standard fowls. This can easily be demonstrated by anyone who will undertake to raise a flock of Black Minorca chickens. If given just ordinary care, clean quarters and protection from birds and animals of prey, they thrive from the start and make strong, vigorous fowls. In the whole twenty-one years that I have bred Black Minorca chicks I have never seen one of them afflicted with gaps.

There is some prejudice against black plumage for domestic fowls, but the reasons given for objecting to black fowls are of no importance and we have good authority for saying that abundance of color pigment, in animal physique, indicates a proportional amount of vi-

tality and vigor, and the black pigment indicates a stronger nature than any lighter color.

One English naturalist, speaking of the different varieties of Leghorns and the importance of color breeding, says by way of illustration that the blacks are the most economical, are very wild and very hardy; because very near to the natural color. Another speaks of the black leopard and the black rabbit as examples of exceptional abundance of vigor, in which the visible result is the excess of pigment. He thinks, too, that vigor and hardiness are accompaniments of yellow pigment, but perhaps not so much so as of the black. He says: "We are accustomed to think that abundance of coloring matter indicates vigor, richness of blood, and for some years we have maintained that the presence of black pigment communicated to the flesh of fowls a special savor; and we have been equally accustomed to think that the absence of coloring matter indicates weakness, poverty of blood, anaemia, etc., etc."

In this connection I think it not out of place to reprint an article on this subject which was written at my request for the American Black Minorca Club's catalogue by Judge L. C. Holden as follows:

Two years ago I furnished, by request, a letter on "Minorcas in the Far North." That favor was asked of me because I live farther North than any other member of the American Black Minorca Club—my residence being at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, at the outlet of Lake Superior. By that letter I tried to satisfy its readers that the Black Minorca thrives as well here as in the more southern latitudes. The "cold facts" of the situation had long before satisfied me that no breed will thrive here better than our own black beauties. I am now asked to contribute a letter on the "Hardiness of Black Minorcas," but I would hesitate to "tell the whole truth," but for the fact that I am fortified by eye witnesses, and a part of this history has already been preserved by the photographer's art. In the first place I do not class myself as a skilled fancier, but as a breeder for practical purposes—**results**—though I must admit that at the County Fairs and the Winter shows

hereabouts my Black Minorcas have never failed to win first, second and third prizes for singles, pairs and pens; and now to freshen the blood, our best breeding pen has in it the first prize cockerel at the Michigan State Fair of 1904—purchased after his winning the blue, from Jacob Beauman, who bred him, and at our recent winter show he outclassed any I had raised by 1½ points, according to the markings of Judge Frank W. Traviss, and I think he is as hardy as those of our own raising.

But now to the story of actual hardiness. About three years ago I entered my coop one morning and found one of my best Black Minorca pullets apparently suffering from some strange malady. She stood bracing and her head was on the ground with the underside of the beak uppermost. She was at once isolated without examination. She continued in this condition for two days, when, having more time, I carefully examined her and found her neck had been broken near the body, a section of the neck bone having slipped by so that the disjointed condition could be plainly felt. She was examined by neighbors and then I pulled and pressed the neck bone into place. In other words I reduced the fracture, or set her neck. For a few hours after my surgical operation she was much weaker than before and could not stand, but the following day she could walk around and carry her head right side up and on a level with her back. In two or three more days I could not tell her from my others and have never known since then which she is, but I do know that she still lives and continues to lay the great white eggs and lots of them. I do not kill off my Minorcas until they are quite old, for they continue to lay all right until they are several years old (much older, I think, than most other breeds) and then are still prime for the table. Notwithstanding I keep them to a good old age, yet I have never in all the years I have kept them had but two Black Minorcas die a natural death, though in the meantime I have had plenty of other breeds sicken and die on exactly the same keep—all running together, except at breeding time. Some fancier of other breeds may ask why I keep any

other breeds if Minorcas are so much better. I answer, "I keep the others to do the setting, as my Minorcas will not set and I do not use an incubator."

November 12th, 1904, Herbert V. Hughes, proprietor of the Belvidere Hotel in this city, killed a number of fowls for the usual Sunday chicken dinner at the hotel. The killing was done in the usual manner by holding the birds by the feet and chopping their heads off with an axe upon a block and throwing the bodies into an empty barrell. A few hours later the girls of the hotel went to the shed to pick and dress the fowls, when a Black Minorca pullet was taken from the barrel and her feathers pulled, she flopped, and the girl dropped her in fright. The pullet, the headless, like the others, struck on her feet and slowly walked around the room, whereupon the girls, all terrorized, ran into the hotel screaming. Investigation followed and it was discovered that the Black Minorca, the entirely headless, refused to die.

The local papers told the story and for more than two weeks great crowds thronged the Hotel Belvidere to see the strange and unbelievable sight of a living headless hen. Everybody who heard of it seemed to be from Missouri and would not believe until they had actually seen and critically examined, whereupon they would go forth among their friends, telling the truth, only to be disbelieved by all listeners who had not already seen the sight, stranger than fiction.

Mr. Hughes fed the hen by means of a syringe injected into the raw end of the food pipe. Biddy seemed to relish it. At times she would walk slowly about, stretch up and flap her wings, going through the motion of trying to adjust and smooth her ruffled feathers as though her head had not been chopped off. At other times she would turn on her perch, sit down and get up and turn again, and at other times tried to croke or sing. She appeared not to suffer pain and to be as happy and contented as any hen.

On the 25th day of November Mr. Hughes took the biddy to the photograph gallery of Lockwood & Lemon, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, where, sitting upon a perch, she was twice photographed, and at my request, Seeman & Peters of Saginaw, Michigan, have made the photograveur cuts accompanying this article for the benefit of those who could not, without them, bring themselves to believe the truth of the story of Hughes' headless hen.

The pictures show her feathers badly ruffled and disordered. That condition resulted from much handling by persons who would not believe their own eyes, but would insist on handling her over and pulling her feathers apart to see if there were not some mechanical device employed to deceive the eye. This Minorca lived until November 30th, five days after the accompanying pictures were taken and seventeen days after her head was chopped off with an axe, when she died, the result of the attendant, in Mr. Hughes' absence, carelessly al-

lowing the end of the neck to heal over the end of the windpipe, so closely as to smother or choke her to death.

Hundreds saw the headless hen and hundreds wondered; but all were convinced that this Minorca hen lived seventeen days without a head, in defiance of nature and nature's laws. Had she received the same care which the President of this club gives his Minorcas she might have been still living and equaled in value the one thousand dollar cockerel of the same breed.

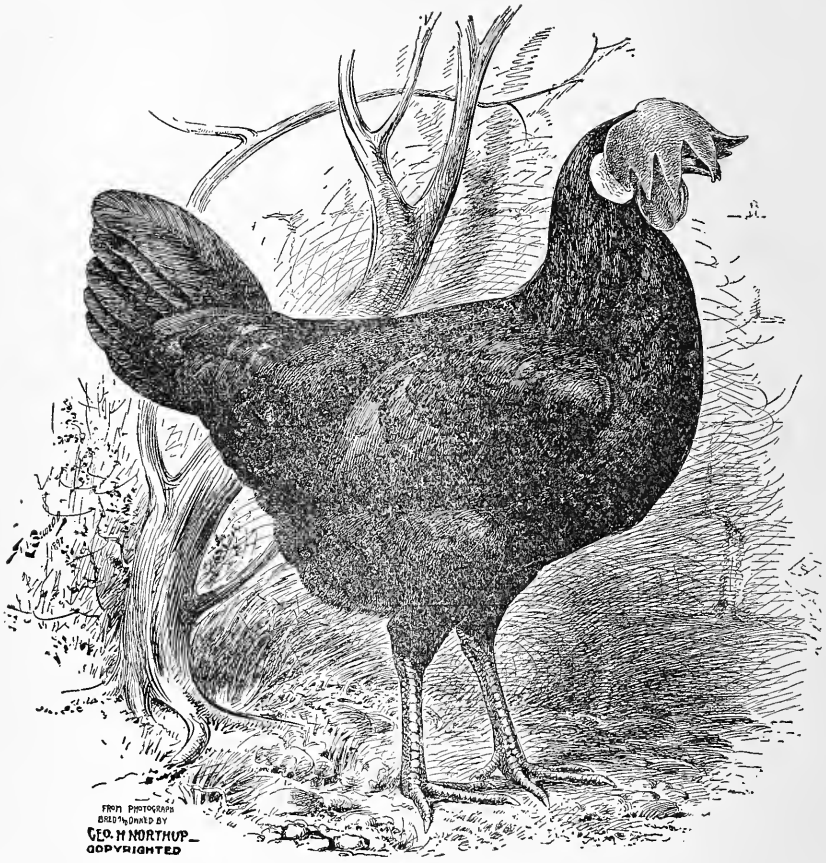
Inasmuch as Minorcas will not die off like others by reason of illness, but live on in good health and lay on in great numbers, refuse to die when their necks are broken, and demonstrate the fact that you can not kill them with an axe, who shall say the Black Minorcas are not the hardiest and most healthy hens in the world?

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan,
March 15, 1905.

DESCRIPTION OF SINGLE COMB BLACK MINORCAS.

The standard weight for Single Comb Black Minorcas is nine pounds for cock, seven and one-half for hen, seven and one-half for cockerel and six and one-half for pullet. Minorcas belong to the Mediterranean class and are the largest fowl in that class. There was a period in their history when the Blacks were called Red Faced Black Spanish and some writers think that was their original name, but in this respect I believe they are mistaken and that it was only a local and temporary appellation first used 30 or 40 years after they were well established as Minorcas.

They are distinguished by length of back and depth of body, high stature, a large strong frame amply rounded out with the most flexible and elastic muscles.



ELEGANTA

Weight, 7 1-4 pounds.

This hen was sired by Black Giant, and is a sister to a bird which as cockerel won first in breeding pen at New York, and several other Madison Square winners. She is also sister to Toro, whose cut appears in this book. Her comb is as near perfect under the requirements of the new standard as it is possible to imagine. Her form for elegance and her carriage for style is about all that can be desired.

The Minorca is elegant in form rather than clumsy or awkward, and its every motion indicates strength, vigor and grace. Instead of moving slowly, as many large fowls do, it is sprightly and ever on the alert to win its food and avoid its enemies. Another characteristic of the Minorca, and one in which it is unlike other large fowls, is that its feathers lie smoothly and very close to its body, for which reason the Minorca looks much smaller than other fowls of the same weight and has a smoother and more stylish appearance. It is impossible to conceive of any more beautiful and perfect adaptation of structure to the conditions of existence and functions of life than that which is exhibited in the Minorca with reference to its intended mode of life. Since the Minorca was admitted to the American Standard in 1888 it has been favored by having a standard made to fit the best natural type of the breed instead of being encumbered with unnatural requirements and having its best development hampered to suit passing fads and fancies of the hour.

The standard weights as given at the beginning of this chapter are about the average weights, for though some cocks have reached eleven pounds and some hens weigh eight and one-half pounds each, others, which are equally well bred, fall below the standard weight according to conditions which are more or less favorable to vigorous growth. It is very easy to breed good stock so that nearly all specimens will reach the standard in weight and approach creditably near to it in other points. But so much depends on food and care during the period of growth, and nature is so eccentric in her freaks, that it would be unreasonable to expect all specimens of any variety of fowls to be exactly the same size or without variation in other respects. The aim of the standard is to describe an ideal bird which is a composite of the best in each section as seen in the best specimens of the breed when reared under the most favorable conditions. It is by breeding to produce birds as near as possible to this described ideal and by bringing the best results of our labor together in the showroom for comparison that American Minorca fanciers

have been able, not only to perpetuate the original excellence of Black Minorcas, but to improve their qualities of usefulness.

In external appearance no fowl is more beautiful than the Single Comb Black Minorca, with its glistening plumage of solid green black, its bright red face and large comb and wattles of same color, with the large pure white almond shaped ear-lobe, which intervenes between the bright red of comb and face and the metallic green black plumage, contrasting beautifully with both.

While the legs of the Black Minorca are dark colored below the feathers, the skin of the Minorca, which is covered with feathers, is delicate white. The legs of the Minorca are long and in good proportion to the long sloping back. In color, the darker the legs the better. However, the color of legs is different at different ages, varying in young chicks from light to nearly black in different specimens. The lightest colored legs of chicks become as dark as the darkest at maturity. The best specimens have black or nearly black legs by the time they are eight months old, but after the bird has reached full maturity its legs grow lighter in color as it advances in age.

For description of shape of comb see the ideal cuts of male and female. Notice that the comb of male has six even serrations, that it follows the shape of the neck, but does not rest on the feathers, is smooth from front to back, also straight and erect and has a broad base which makes the comb less liable to lop. Now I would call attention to the wattles. The same cut shows that they should be of equal length, soft and falling with the edges turned outward, but free from folds or wrinkles. The comb of the Minorca hen is quite large and is similar in outline to that of the cock, but instead of standing erect it should fall gracefully at one side of the head. The perfect comb rises slightly from the head at the front and forms a small loop at one side before falling on the other side. The shape and position of hen's comb should be such as to give her perfect vision in front, but her " sidewise glance " is partly obstructed by the comb as it falls over the side of her

head. The Minorca pullet develops her comb so slowly that it seldom attains full size until she is about to begin laying. During moult the combs of Minorcas shrink away so as to be hardly recognized to be the same. This is more noticeable in the hen than in the cock, for her comb nearly always shrinks to less than half its usual size during her moulting period and does not resume its natural size again until her new feathers are fully grown and she is about ready to begin laying.

THE MINORCA AS A GENERAL PURPOSE FOWL.

A thoroughly excellent general purpose fowl is understood to be a breed which reaches or surpasses the average degree of excellence in all the qualities for which fowls are valued. Now that incubators and brooders are so successfully operated and so generally used, the hatching and rearing of chicks has ceased to be a purpose which fowls are desired to fill. It is for them an occupation of the past, now as needless as the arts of spinning and weaving are for the modern housewife. In this respect the Minorca makes for itself a special value in absolutely refusing to waste its time sitting. Minorca hens are the most persistent non-sitters we have and are the largest of all non-sitting breeds, being at least two pounds heavier than their nearest competitor in this line of usefulness. That the Minorca hen does not otherwise waste the time, which she neglects to use in performing maternal duties, is well demonstrated by her unequaled record as an egg-producer summer and winter under all circumstances and in all climates.

Another feature of the value of Minorcas is that the laying period of their lives is comparatively longer than that of the other breeds. Well kept Minorca pul-

lets begin laying when very young. Those hatched in April lay at the age of five months, and many July and August-hatched Minorca pullets are reported to begin laying in January and February, and instead of falling off in egg-production proportionally early, Minorca hens lay well to a greater age than is usual for common fowls or hens of other breeds. As a rule the average hen is considered to have passed her most profitable time for egg-production when she is two years old. In my own experience I have owned many Black Minorca hens which laid as well at four and five years of age as at any time in their life, and some still older laid well as long as they lived. The American Cultivator, November 3, 1900, gives a report of an experiment which was made at the Canadian Central Experiment Station Farm to test the laying qualities of old hens, three years old or more, from December 1st to June 30th, with the following results:

7 Black Minorcas produced 493 eggs=70 3-7 eggs each
10 B. P. Rocks produced 555 eggs=55 1-2 eggs each
12 W. Leghorns produced 591 eggs=49 1-4 eggs each
7 Col. Dorkings produced 342 eggs=48 6-7 eggs each

Showing that Minorcas laid nearly a third more than the average of their competitors at the age of three years and over. But the most extraordinary case which has come to my notice is that of a Black Minorca hen 13 years old which laid 102 eggs between November 1st and March 23rd, as reported to me in the following letter:

Port Allegheny, Pa., March 23, 1905.

Mr. George H. Northup,

Send me your catalogue of poultry. Maybe here is something that will interest you: Fourteen years ago this month I bought a setting of Black Minorca eggs of you and hatched 10, I think, from them. This winter one hen of that brood has laid 102 eggs since November 1st, and they are the largest I get out of a flock of 100. The hen is a pet and lays in a place on the porch, so know it to be a fact, also because of a peculiar ring at the small end of egg. She is the only one of that brood

left; as we have her marked we know she is of that brood. A pretty good record, I think.

Very truly yours,
W. L. HAZEN.

The Minorca has earned the high position which it holds in the poultry world, as being the greatest of all egg-producers known, both as to size and number of eggs laid, and it cannot be surpassed in the quality of its meat for table use. Besides, its hardiness makes it a very easy fowl to rear. I purposely said the Minorca earned its position, because when I first introduced Black Minorcas to American breeders, about twenty-two years ago, by importing them from England, many articles appeared in the journals saying, "Don't be humbugged by the extravagant stories of the great laying qualities of Black Minorcas," and "We have several varieties which can discount them in the number of eggs laid." But the Minorcas proved that the writers of such articles did not know what they were talking about, by demonstrating, in the egg contests of practical poultrymen in the United States, their ability to surpass all competitors. Then it was declared, by those who did not know, that the Minorcas were not as good winter layers as some other breeds, but after testing them experimently, in comparison with other breeds, for three successive winters, the Report of the Canadian Experiment Station places Black Minorcas at the head of the list of the most profitable laying hens, and gives one contest for December and January, of Black Minorcas against Light Brahmas, Buff Cochins, Black Hamburgs, Black Langshans, Houdans, White Leghorns, Plymouth Rocks, Red Caps, Andalusians and Wyandottes, showing that the Black Minorcas greatly outlayed their nearest competitors and more than doubled the average of all the other breeds in the contest, in the two least favorable of the winter months of a severe climate. The report further states that Black Minorcas laid larger eggs by actual weight than any other breed of hens at the station, among which we have seen that Light Brahmas were included. A pen of Black Minorcas have a record in England of 236 eggs each, laid in one year. And I

will give an extract of what is said of Minorcas on page 27 of publication 182 (Department of Agriculture), issued by the Board for Exports of New South Wales, Australia. It is as follows: "This breed, as it existed a number of years ago, was a more compact bird than that exhibited at the present time. They have large, evenly serrated combs, with an almond-shaped ear-lobe, the legs are black and flesh white. Although not a great fattener, the Minorca is the very best layer we have, the eggs are large, and wonderful figures have been published as to quantities, but allowing the usual discount for interested returns, they are left with a record far in excess of any other breed, while the great numbers annually exhibited at the leading shows, and being more generally kept than any other pure variety, is evidence sufficient of their popularity, whether as an exhibition bird or a useful domestic fowl. They can be kept profitably, whether on the free range of farm-holding or in the confined run of the suburban poultry keeper. The extreme temperature of winter or summer months have little effect on them for ill. The chickens are easily reared, the cockerels are very precocious and the pullets lay at an early age. When given a free run they can be very cheaply fed, being good scavengers for natural food. To improve the Minorca, as a layer, by crossing, need not be attempted, but the breed can be used to great advantage for improving the laying properties of a yard of ordinary farm poultry. A male bird of the breed will suffice for every dozen hens; and in selecting such, exhibition specimens are unnecessary, purity of breed and good size, combined with a vigorous constitution, being chief considerations."

In the recent egg-laying contest at Rockdale, N. S. W., Australia, conducted by Mr. McIntosh for the "Daily Telegraph" of Sydney, which commenced April, 1905, and ended with March, 1906, fifty pens competing, nine different breeds being represented, Black Minorcas led the list in number of eggs per hen and value of same. The average number of eggs per Black Minorca hen was 237.5 and the value of each hen's product as sold in the market was $4.78. The nearest competitor to the

Minorca laid 218.5 eggs per hen and value of product per hen was $4.60 or 18 cents each less than the product of Black Minorcas per hen. Aside from Black Minorcas, the average per hen for all the other breeds in competition was 201.74 eggs or 35.76 eggs per hen less than the Black Minorcas, and the value of product from the other eight breeds averaged $3.945 per hen, showing that the Minorcas earned 83 1-2 cents each more than the average of all the other hens in competition with them. All the hens in this contest were housed and fed exactly alike. The runs were 10x40 feet and were bare sand without grass, which shows that Black Minorcas bear confinement as well as they appreciate and utilize a large run. The breeds in this competition were Black Minorcas, Langshans, Black Hamburgs, Rose Comb White Leghorns, Single Comb Brown Leghorns, Single Comb White Leghorns, Black Orpingtons, Rose Comb Brown Leghorns and Silver Wyandottes. According to this contest, and laying at the same rate a flock of 100 Black Minorcas will produce eggs to the value of $478 per year or $83.50 more profit per year than the average of the other best laying breeds at market prices, which were about the same as we receive in this country, the lowest being 13 cents per dozen and the highest 48 cents per dozen.

In the light of the foregoing contests, it is evident that market poultrymen in general will sooner or later take up Black Minorcas, both to satisfy their customers who will demand larger and better eggs, and to derive greater profit for themselves, because, as we have seen, Minorcas will lay larger and better eggs than any other breed and at the same time will lay more of them, and buyers will pay more per dozen for large eggs than they will for small ones.

The scarcity of genuine Black Minorcas compared with other breeds is another incentive to breed them. Hundreds of inquiries come every year to Minorca fanciers from people who wish to buy them in lots of from 25 to 1000, either to stock a new plant or to supplant other breeds which have proven less profitable than Minorcas on market farms where other kinds have been kept—

such inquiries are asking for just pure Minorcas with little regard to fancy points and they are willing to pay from $2.00 to $5.00 each for them, making an outlet at good prices for all that are not strictly fancy. The fancy specimens of Black Minorcas sell for higher prices than any other breed for the same simple reasons that they are valued above all other breeds and that the supply is limited. As proof of this, look in the poultry journals and you will see comparatively few offering Minorcas for sale, while the ad. columns are crowded with offers of most all other breeds. Consequently, he who would sell Black Minorcas has only a few sellers to compete with, while to sell any other prominent breed one has hundreds offering the same on every side.

Further, the flesh of Minorcas is equal to any and better than that of most fowls, being exceedingly tender and fine flavored. Their bodies are large, hens weighing from 6 1-2 to 8 pounds and cocks from 8 to 10 pounds, varying with different strains and the care and attention they receive while growing.

I recently read an article from the pen of T. A. Faulds of London, Ont., who is a market dealer in poultry and dairy products, and he says the Minorca is the best chicken he knows for table use, fine quality of meat, excellent flavor, and the nearest approach to turkey of all fowls he has used.

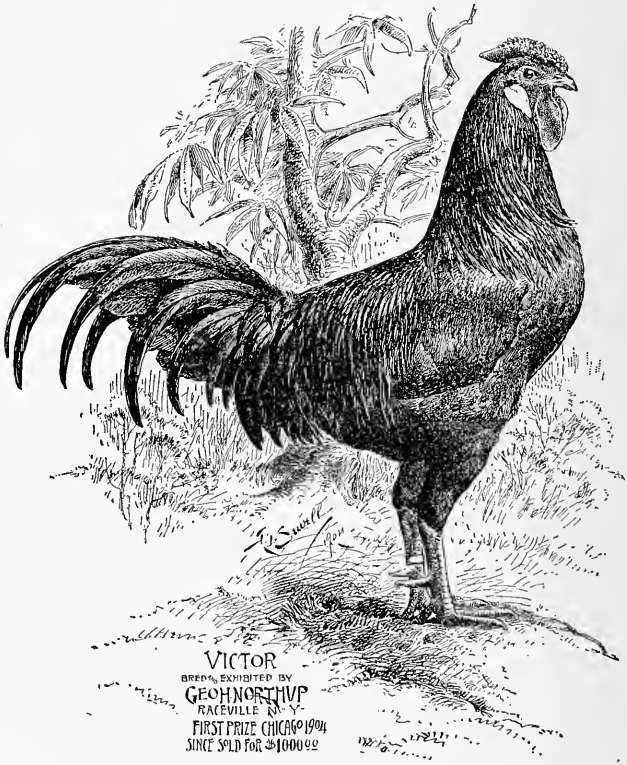
Many of my customers tell me that they find the Black Minorca the best fowl they have tried for table use, the flesh being exceedingly tender, juicy, of fine flavor and abundant in quantity. The same has been my own experience whenever I have used them for that purpose, and I recently read an article contributed by Hon. Joseph P. Hilldorfer, who owns the largest meat business in Pittsburg, Pa., in which he says: "I own the largest and best wholesale and retail meat business in the city and handle dressed poultry by the ton, and I say for table fowl, give me the Minorca, first, last and all the time. I am very well aware that there is a prejudice among some people in favor of the yellow legs and skin in table poultry, but I know that the Minorca, with its white skin and tender, juicy, well flavored meat, is far ahead of any

other breed we handle, and as I cater to the trade of the best restaurants and hotels in the city, I feel capable to judge about such things. Minorcas are so much better for market than other breeds of fowls that I wish I could get enough, so I could handle them exclusively. I am sure there is no other way I could please and keep my patrons so well as to be able at all times to furnish them a plump, well fattened Minorca fowl or chicken. My advice to anyone who wishes the best fowl for the table and the best for laying is to get Black Minorcas, and if you wish to win out in politics, invite your friends to partake of a plump Minorca cockerel, stuffed and roasted fit to win over the finest young turkey they ever saw, and you will not be disappointed.''

Minorcas are easy to care for, tame, gentle and very domestic in their disposition, always watching for natural food which is within their reach, never dull or lazy, but always active, apparently interested in life, and well contented with their lot. There is no breed which bears confinement better.

Mr. Stephen Beale, an English writer who is considered authority on all poultry subjects, says of the Black Minorcas in ''Profitable Poultry Keeping'':

''They form one branch of the Spanish family, and have been carefully bred for many years in the South of England. Their great value as layers has made them very popular all over the country, and they are now the most popular fowl in England. Nor can we wonder at it, for their great fecundity, the large eggs they produce (weighing two pounds to the dozen) their precocity and hardiness, their adaptability for all soils and places, whether confined or otherwise, make them one of the most useful breeds we possess, and being non-sitters, we must give the Minorcas the first position among all the laying breeds of poultry. They are not unlike the Leghorns in their general appearance, having the red face and white ear-lobe, but a much larger comb, and will average in weight, two to three pounds heavier. They are very hardy, mature early, pullets laying at sixteen to twenty weeks, can be kept on any soil, are capital foragers, small eaters, and the fowl best suiting the farmer, either alone or to cross on other varieties.''



VICTOR, Weight 9 lbs.

The First and Only Cock Ever Sold for $1,000.
Winner of 1st Philadelphia, 1st Boston
and 1st Chicago.

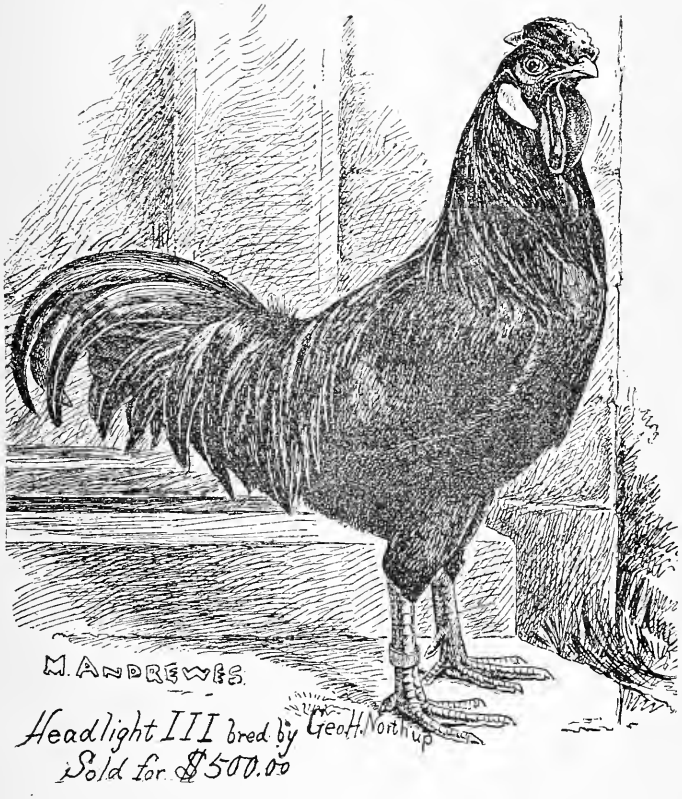
ORIGIN OF ROSE COMB BLACK MINORCAS.

The first year I bred Black Minorcas from imported stock I hatched a cockerel which had two side sprigs at the back end of his comb. This was a source of annoyance to me for a while every time I saw the bird, because he was elegant in shape, a fine large fellow and just my ideal of the correct Minorca type, and I regretted to see the symmetry of so fine a bird marred by an irregular comb. But later I decided to mate him to a hen which I selected as the best suited to my purpose, partly to satisfy my curiosity and to ascertain if a system of breeding persistently followed would produce a distinct variation which could be depended upon to repeat itself and leave all other points unchanged. I had the Rose Comb Black Minorca in mind from the start because I thought a pure Black Minorca with a small rose comb, or, as nearly as possible, no comb at all, would fill a certain place in the poultry world better than any breed already established could do. The Single Comb Black Minorca seemed to me to be all that could be desired in the way of a general purpose fowl except that its very large comb seemed likely to prevent it from becoming a general favorite in our Northern climate. Besides, I saw in such a system of breeding an opportunity to ascertain how much a strain of fowls could be made to diverge from its natural type by breeding in one direction away from the natural tendency. I considered the knowledge to be gained worth the effort, whether the primary object of producing pure Rose Comb Black Minorcas was or was not achieved. If it did succeed, it proved the strong influence of mating for good or bad results and proved the value of thorough investigation of any line of breeding which suggested improvement in the established qualities of a breed.

Breeding only from birds which showed the greatest variation from the smooth Single Comb, and selecting each season only those which approached nearest to the object in view, it was not until the summer of 1889 that I succeeded in getting one pullet with anything that could be called a rose comb. This proved to be an important gain, for 75 per cent. of the chicks she produced in the spring and summer of 1890 had rose combs, mostly of irregular shape. I selected those with the best shaped and smallest combs to breed from the coming season.

The Rose Comb Black Minorcas which I thus bred were the first ever bred anywhere. The first published article mentioning Rose Comb Black Minorcas was written by me and published in Poultry Monthly, February, 1891. The first Rose Comb Black Minorcas which were ever exhibited at a show were my own, shown at Gloversville, N. Y., December, 1891. The year following I showed thirteen Rose Comb Black Minorcas, twelve adult birds and one pullet, at the New York and New England Fair held at Albany, and in January, 1894, I showed a full class at Saratoga Springs. Up to that time no other breeder had ever exhibited an adult Rose Comb Black Minorca. I did not begin to offer for sale either Rose Comb fowls or their eggs till the spring of 1894, and then only a limited number. Previous to that time no Rose Comb eggs or fowls had left my yards, except two males, which were sold to parties who used them for cross-breeding, and one setting of eggs which I gave to a friend who kept every bird hatched from them till after I began to sell Rose Comb Minorca eggs for hatching.

By thus keeping the entire product of Rose Comb Black Minorcas in my own hands I could carry out my plan of breeding without interruption, and would know how any result which might be achieved had been arrived at, and profit by the knowledge in future operations. If a Rose Comb fowl had been my only object there would have been no reason for trying to breed it in this way, because there were plenty of Rose Comb varieties already established. A Rose Comb fowl with the external appearance of a Minorca could probably

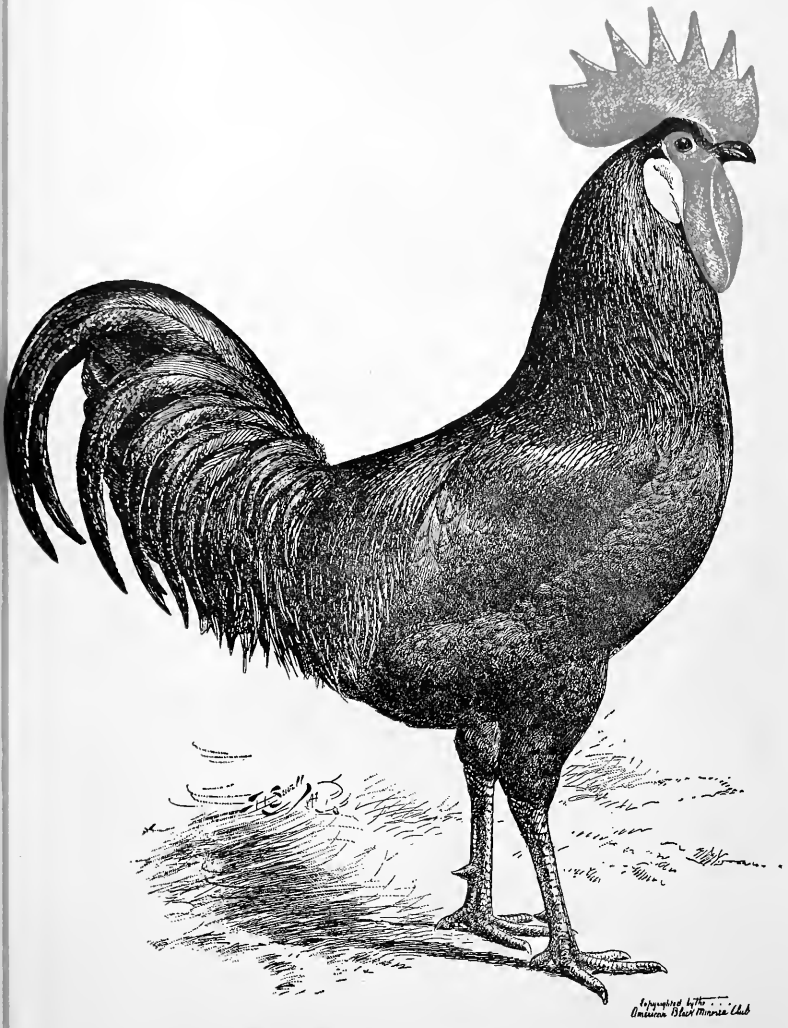


HEADLIGHT III.

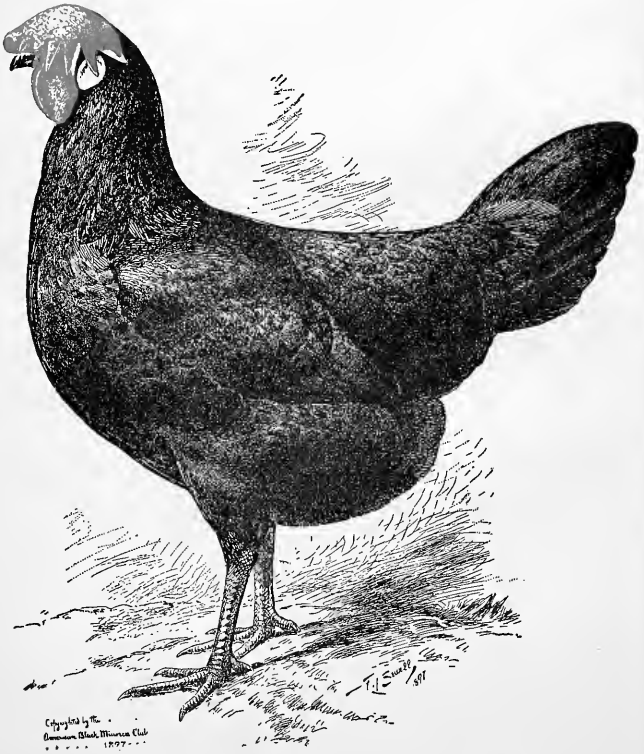
This cock is brother to Victor, the cock which was sold for $1,000, and whose picture appears in this book. Victor and Headlight III were hatched from the same setting of eggs.

have been bred more easily by crossing, but it would have proven nothing in the line of breeding that I was working on, for instead of establishing anything in regard to the results of systematic breeding, any cross-breeding is sure to ingraft other qualities besides the particular quality or feature desired, while a complete change in the form of one feature such as I was breeding for and such as I have accomplished, shows that there is no end of the improvement which can be made in similar ways, and at the same time demonstrates the great danger of faulty selection and mating by which the breeder may be unconsciously by carelessness or ignorance breeding directly away from the result he most desires. In producing the Rose Comb Black Minorcas I did not resort to any crossing whatever, but followed always the same course which is described at the beginning of this chapter.

It was quite difficult, and required many years of breeding, to reduce the size of comb and establish a desirable shape. At first many of the combs were as thin at the head as a single comb, terminating in several rows of irregular serrations, making the comb top-heavy and causing it to drop over to one side of the head and those which sat more firmly on the head were, some of them, as large as Red Cap combs and of many shapes. Some were regular on one side and irregular on the other, forming a sort of crescent. Others were large and full at the front, but only extending back as far as attached to the head; some of these were even hollowed at the back instead of ending with a spike, and some had the appearance of tipping forward over the beak. Another variation of comb was partly rose and partly single, that is, either rose at the front and single at the back, or the reverse. These variations have, by careful mating, been gradually overcome and the Rose Comb Black Minorca now breeds as true to comb as any of the older of rose comb varieties. Until this result was obtained I each year killed many birds which I could have sold for large prices had I been willing to do so. I bred only from those which approached nearest my ideal. The chicks selected from the hatch of 1887, four in number, two



IDEAL BLACK MINORCA MALE.



IDEAL BLACK MINORCA FEMALE.

cockerels and two pullets, were bred in separate pens in 1888. Pullets raised from one of these pens were mated with cockerels raised from the other, and vice versa, for the next year's breeding. And my system has since been to keep them divided and increase the number of pens so that I could each year breed farther away from the common center and each year bring the most distant relations together for mating, thus to breed out instead of in.

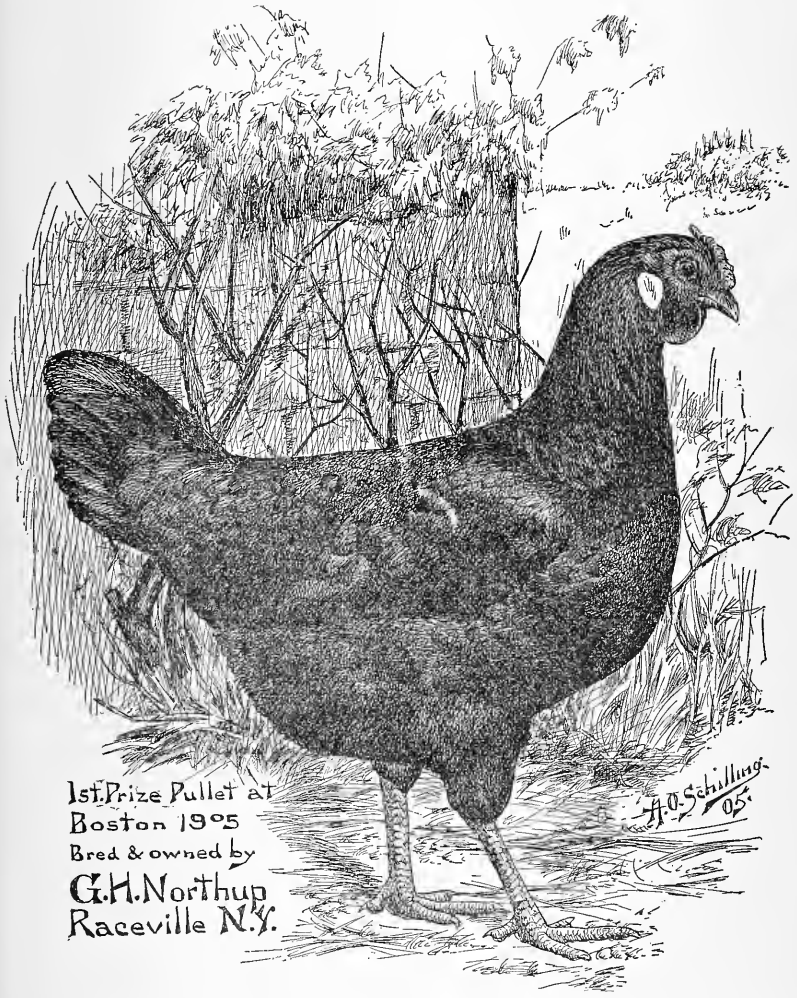
PROGRESS OF ROSE COMB BLACK MINORCAS.

During the time that I was culling my flocks and rejecting a greater part of each hatch as unfit to breed from, the Rose Comb Black Minorcas were gaining notoriety from other sources. Immediately after my first Rose Comb article appeared in the Poultry Monthly many people wrote me desiring to buy some of my Rose Comb Black Minorcas or their eggs, but I refused all offers and did not begin to offer either for sale until the spring of 1894, as I have previously stated, when I offered a limited number of eggs for hatching at $10.00 per 13. In the winter of 1895 I sold a few trios at $35.00 per trio. By this time I had exhibited some of my Rose Comb Black Minorca fowls and chicks in different shows. Several fanciers mentioned them favorably in articles which appeared in different journals, and many people became interested in them.

It was now evident that Rose Comb Black Minorcas were a valuable acquisition from a money standpoint

just like anything else in which people see practical value, desire to possess, and are willing to pay for according to their desire. This growing popularity naturlally attracted the attention of breeders, and I have certain knowledge of four who, rather than wait until they could obtain the genuine Rose Comb Black Minorcas or pay prices which were in accordance with the value of such a variety, tried to produce by cross-breeding, fowls which should resemble them sufficiently to be exhibited and sold as true Rose Comb Black Minorcas. Such breeders, of course, cared nothing for the future of the Minorca nor for that of any other pure breed. The controlling desire was to produce something quickly to derive money from just at that present time with little regard to the real and permanent value of that which was produced or its lasting value as a source of income, nor did they appreciate the knowledge of principles by which such results could be produced. Of course the Rose Comb fowls which were thus produced were not Minorcas at all, nor will their progeny ever be Minorcas or answer the purpose for which Rose Comb Black Minorcas were originated, because they will always be reverting to the foreign blood which is in them, some showing one characteristic and some another, so that there will be no uniformity among them, either in egg production or outside appearance, and the best of them have so little of the true Minorca type that they have always been defeated when they have come in competition with genuine Minorcas. The impression that these cross-bred fowls made was, that they were inferior to the Single Comb Black Minorcas and they were criticised as resembling Red Caps, Hamburgs or Wyandottes, in type, as much or more than they did Minorcas.

But the Rose Comb Black Minorcas which I originated could not show any other than the true Minorca type, because they had no other than pure Minorca blood in them. They had only to be seen to be recognized as Minorcas, of the highest order and finest type, and when they have come in competition with Single Comb Black Minorcas for special prizes the Rose Combs have won more than the Single Combs. The best Minorca judges,



1st Rose Comb Black Minorca Pullet, Boston, 1905.

Weight, 6 1-2 lbs.

both English and American, who have seen them in the shows, as well as in my yards, have said they see no characteristic difference between the best Single Comb Black Minorcas and the Rose Comb Black Minorcas which I have exhibited.

Rose Comb Black Minorcas have overcome all the prejudice which was created against them by the spurious stock which was thrown on the market under their name before they were well known to the public, and not only this, but they have steadily gained in popular favor until they stand today far ahead of all other breeds and varieties of fowls as money earners for their owners. All breeders of Rose Comb Black Minorcas, of whose business I have any knowledge, report that they have more ready sale for Rose Comb Black Minorca eggs and breeding birds and at higher prices than for the product of any other variety they have ever bred.

Undoubtedly the price paid for Rose Comb Black Minorcas and their product of eggs averages each year four times as much per fowl as that of any other variety.

I quote from my book, "Minorcas, All Varieties," published in 1898 regarding Rose Comb Black Minorcas, as follows: "I know of no variety which promises so great profit for the investment as they, nor any way that money can be invested with so good prospect of large returns as in well bred fowls of this variety," and the experience of the nine years since then have more than fulfilled that prediction. Ever since that time the demand for genuine Rose Comb Black Minorcas has increased faster than the supply, fowls have always been sold quickly as soon as they were offered, most of the eggs have been sold months before they were laid and some of them more than a year in advance. In the case of my own fowls, for several years, all the eggs they have laid from the first of March until September have been used for hatching at $5.00 to $25.00 per 13, none less than $10.00 per 13 before June 1st. Many settings have been sold in June and July at $12.50 per 13. I know of several other breeders who cannot nearly fill the orders they receive at $10.00 and $15.00 per 13 eggs.

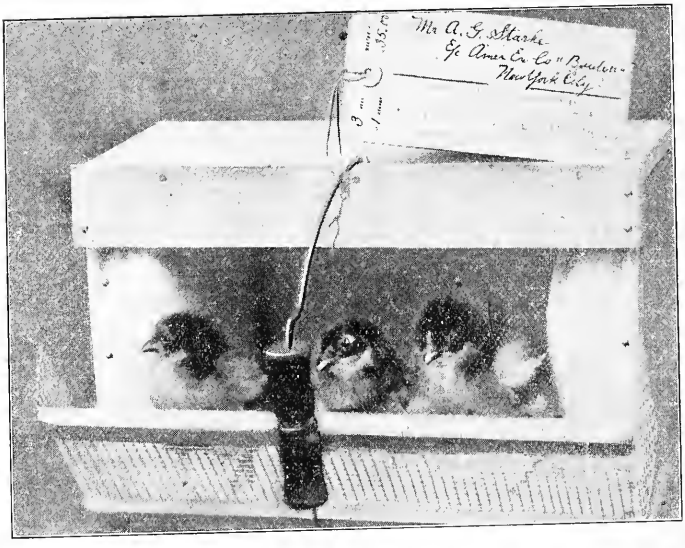
The acme of high prices was thought to have been

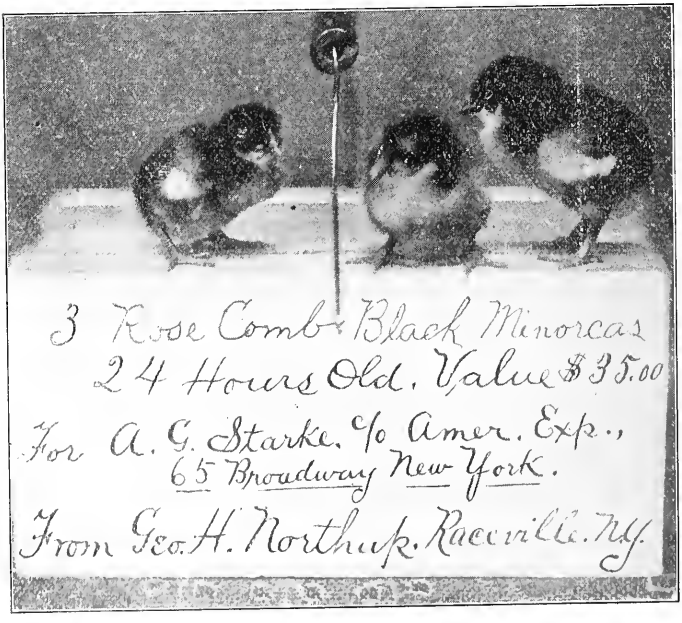
reached when I sold nineteen Rose Comb Black Minorcas for $3400.00, receiving an even $1000 for one of the cocks, but since that time I have refused an offer from the same gentleman for twenty-seven birds at the same rate per bird that he paid for the nineteen mentioned, and I made another sale which seems more remarkable to me when I sold three one-day-old chicks for $35.00. See engravings of these chicks, also the $1000.00 cock, in this book and read what the editor of Poultry Success says of the above mentioned sale in issue of March, 1905.

"To the most of our readers a transaction in Rose Comb Black Minorcas in which Mr. George H. Northup of Raceville, N. Y., was one of the principals, is still fresh in their memory. This transaction has not been equaled in the world or in the history of standard-bred poultry by any variety. How long before it will be equaled or exceeded we cannot tell, but there is one thing certain, low prices for stock of the same character as that bred by Mr. Northup are a thing of the past. One thousand dollars for a single bird seems at first thought to be "foolhardy" on the part of the purchaser, but it has developed that the purchaser of Mr. Northup's noted Rose Comb Black Minorca has developed a wonderful trade in this variety in his own country for the breed and has tried since to get prices on more birds from Mr. Northup to which he declined.

Mr. Northup showed us a letter from the same party in Germany who bought the 19 head of Rose Comb Black Minorcas at $3400, urging him to sell him 27 head more at the same average price per head, but Mr. Northup refused absolutely to name this party any figure that would induce him to part with the birds. At the time of our visit (September 25), Mr. Northup had already orders booked for altogether 15 sittings of eggs for hatchings at $10 per setting. He informed us that the demand for his Single Comb Black Minorcas was fully equaled to that of the Rose Combs, and was at this extraordinary season of the year, at the time of our visit, booking orders for Single Comb Minorca eggs to be delivered in the spring."

The remarkable sales of Rose Comb Black Minorcas


Mr A. G. Starke
% Amer Ex Co
New York City


3 Rose Comb Black Minorcas
24 Hours Old. Value $35.00
For A. G. Starke. % Amer. Exp.,
65 Broadway New York.
From Geo. H. Northup. Rockville. N.Y.

have not been confined to one breeder in any sense. Calvin Lee, Hyde Park, Mass., paid me $10.00 for thirteen Rose Comb Black Minorca eggs which were sent to him the last of March, 1905. He raised seven chicks to maturity and sold four of the pullets for $120.00, and there was one cockerel in the flock which was worth more than all the four pullets which he sold. I bought from S. A. Howland, Granville, N. Y., his entire flock, thirty-nine Rose Comb Black Minorca chicks (hatched from eggs I sold him) at an average price of $25.00 each. Last January Lloyd C. Mishler bought a fine Rose Comb Black Minorca cock from me, for which he paid me $200.00, and before he had owned the bird four months he wrote me that since he had placed the cock at the head of a fine pen, he had increased the price of eggs from that pen $10.00 per setting above the price he had formerly sold them for, and had sold enough eggs at the increased price to nearly pay for the bird, beside having a fine flock of chicks which were sired by him, therefore he considered that the bird had fully paid for himself in that short time, with apparently plenty of time ahead of him to repeat the same record several times.

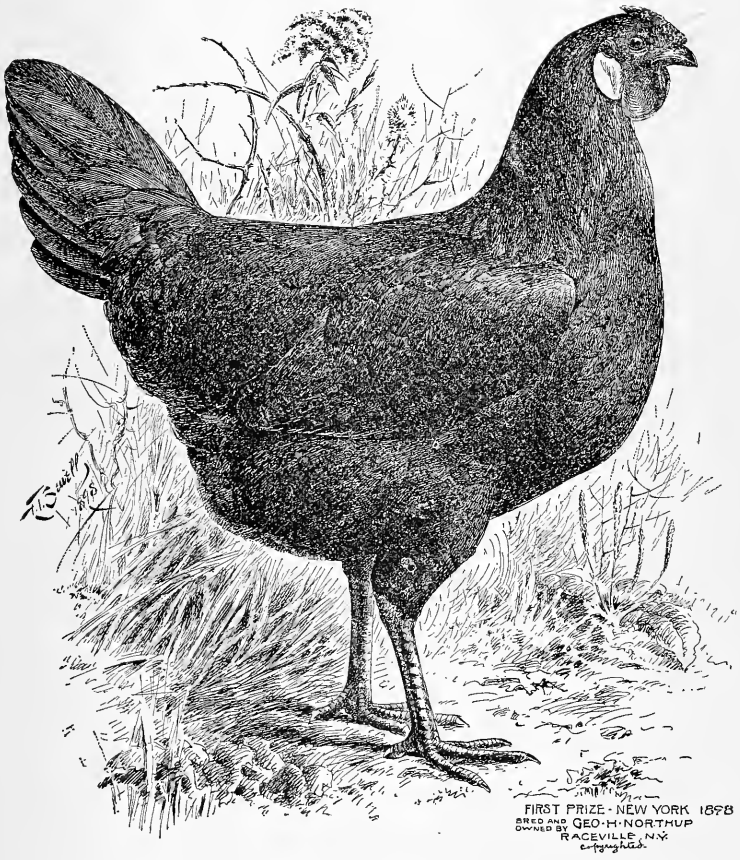
I could go on giving names of breeder after breeder who are having similar success with Rose Comb Black Minorcas, but the instances given are sufficient to prove that they are eminently profitable to those who breed them, because there have never yet been enough of them bred to supply one-tenth of the people who have wanted them and because their worth is becoming better known year after year as they are distributed to buyers throughout the country. It is evident that they are only beginning to enjoy the popularity which is in store for them. I can say now with greater confidence than I said it nine years ago that there is no variety of fowls which promise so great profit for the investment as Rose Comb Black Minorcas, nor any way in which money can be invested for the next ten years with so good prospect of large returns as in well bred fowls of this variety.

THE COMPARATIVE VALUE OF ROSE AND SINGLE COMB MINORCAS.

As Rose Comb Black Minorcas were bred entirely from Single Comb Black Minorcas, the only difference between them is the one distinguishing point, the comb. In most cases, therefore, the choice between the two varieties depends on the taste of the breeder. The only practical difference between the two is, that the rose comb being smaller and more compact does not freeze so easily as the single comb. In fact, the Rose Comb Black Minorcas can be kept in any building where any variety can be kept without freezing their combs and wattles, and for this reason they are more profitable for practical purposes in the colder climates except in specially warm buildings. In buildings or localities where either Single or Rose Comb can be kept in perfect comfort there can be no real choice between them.

In warm or moderate climates there is nothing better than the Single Comb Black Minorcas. On account of the scarcity of Rose Comb Black Minorcas, the Single Combs can be bought for much less money than Rose Combs of equal excellence. Therefore, in deciding between the Rose and the Single Comb Black Minorcas one should consider the advantage and disadvantages of his locality and the trade which it is desirable for him to supply.

The choice between Single and Rose Comb White Minorcas depends on the same conditions which are more or less favorable between the Rose and Single Comb Black Minorcas and can be determined the same way.



"GRACE"

Rose Comb Black Minorca Hen; weight 6 3-4 lbs.; 1st Prize Winner at Madison Square Garden, New York.

HOW TO SELECT AND MATE MINORCAS.

Correct ideas of what is good in the particular variety one is breeding are absolutely indispensable to success. It is so easy to form an ideal which is exaggerated in one point and deficient in another unless one is guided by some set rule. The standard of perfection is designed to furnish such rules for judges and breeders of fowls, therefore the breeder of any variety ought to become perfectly familiar with the standard requirements for the variety which he intends to breed before he undertakes to select birds for breeding or to pass judgment on birds which others have selected. Acquaintance with standard requirements having been gained, the amateur is likely to expect too great perfection in one point and tolerate too little excellence in another because he is not sufficiently acquainted with the birds themselves to apply the standard correctly, therefore it is better to depend on the ideas of someone who has had longer experience in breeding and judging until better knowledge of the variety can be gained by breeding and caring for them and by comparing the best specimens in the showroom.

Utility points ought never to be overlooked, and the fact that in Minorcas the points which count for utility are equally desired in the fancy is one reason why this breed has been so well preserved and why the improvments which have been made in it have counted both for fancy and for utility. The best Minorca breeders have interested themselves so thoroughly and unitedly in forming the Minorca standard, that to breed to the standard is to follow the guide of the most successful breeders.

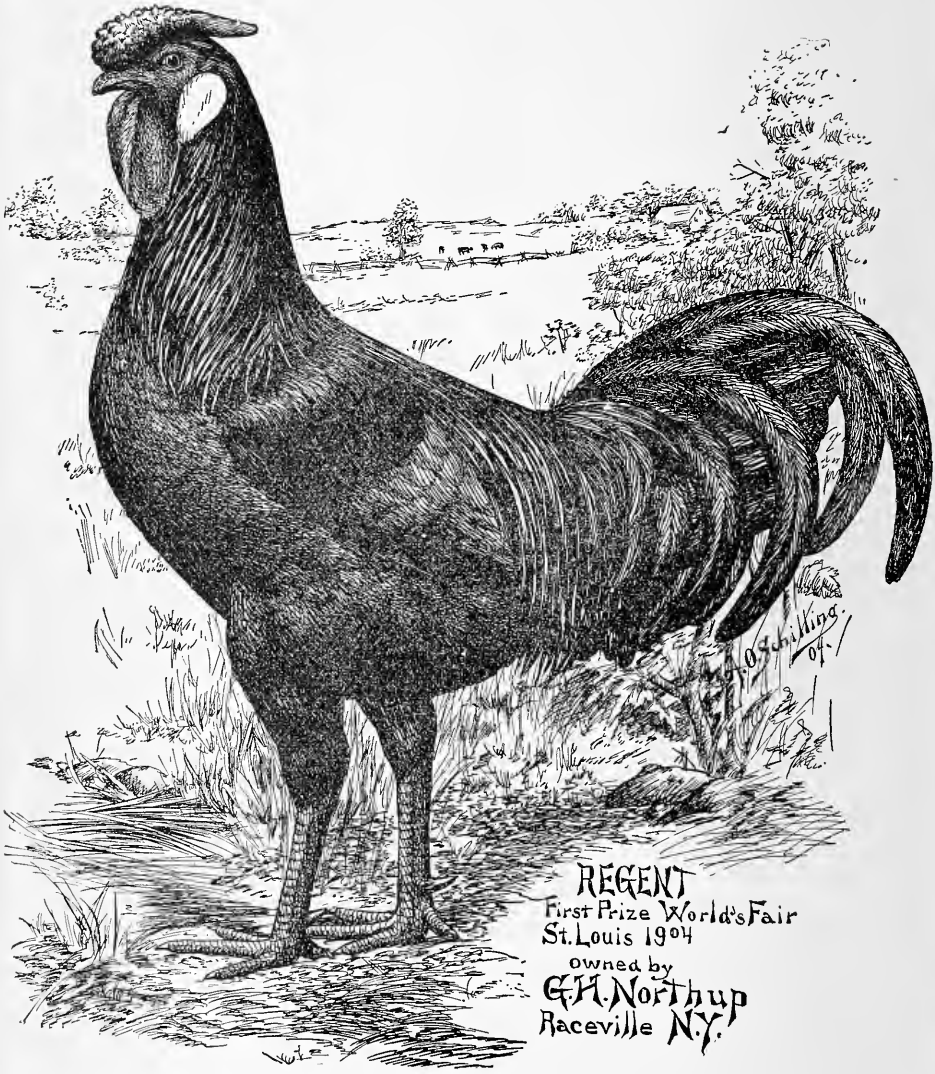
In-breeding should always be avoided and is one of the most important considerations in selecting breeding stock because weakness and loss of vigor, lower fertility

and diminished egg-production are always among the results which follow it, and continued in-breeding will certainly undermine the foundation on which Minorca excellence has been built. For an example of this, note the White Faced Black Spanish which are an off-shoot of the Minorcas, and would naturally have been a useful variety had not the intense in-breeding for white face destroyed them.

New blood should be introduced in each generation from some reliable source. Undoubtedly the birds, both male and female, which naturally conform nearest to the Standard of Perfection are the best to breed from, because as a general rule, like begets like and we can expect a larger per cent. of the chicks to be fancy if the parents are fancy than if the reverse is true, but it does not follow that accidental defects have any influence on the offspring. Injuries to combs and wattles by fighting or frosting, broken feathers or loss of feathers put a bird out of condition for the show-room, but have no effect whatever on the breeding ability and such defects cannot be transmitted to the offspring.

Lineage is another important consideration, more so, if possible, than the fancy points of the individual birds which are selected to breed from. Breeding birds which are naturally excellent in standard requirements and have a long line of ancestors which were strong in the same qualities are the best of all to breed from. The more excellent such birds are, individually, the greater their value as producers, and the poorest of their offspring are more desirable to breed from than the best from a hap-hazard mating, because the good points which they show are strongly bred and much more certain to be reproduced in their offspring. It is impractical to breed from a really fancy bird whose lineage is known to be inferior, and much more so if it be a male than if it be a female, because the male influences all the chicks from his pen, while the female controls none of the chicks except those from her own eggs.

It is the best plan generally to select and mate so that the same pen will produce fine males and fine females, though there are cases where certain results can be ob-



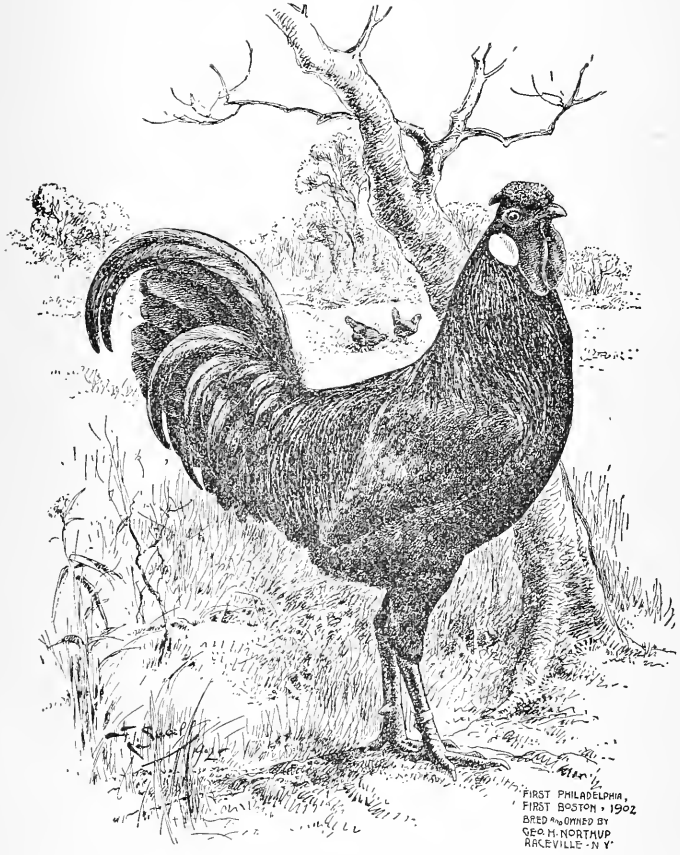
"REGENT,"

First Prize Rose Comb Black Minorca Cock at World's Fair, Weight 10 lbs. Regent was pronounced by poultry judges and breeders to be an easy winner over all the Minorcas exhibited, both Rose and Single Comb. He attracted by far greater attention than any other of the more than ten thousand birds on exhibition.

tained better by a special mating for each sex, for one or two generations only, and in Minorcas this is never desirable except with reference to the combs of the single comb varieties. If the combs of hens are too small or too stiff, or if the combs of males average too thin and lop easily, either can be corrected by a special mating. A good mating to correct the fault in females is to use the hens whose combs are nearest right and a well-bred male with large drooping comb, the thinner the better, one which falls completely over like a hen's comb if such can be obtained, which is correct in outline and serrations. The female progeny of such a mating can then be advantageously mated with a male, which has a good comb of medium thickness and would probably produce excellent males and females. The reverse of this plan should be used to correct the opposite extreme, but it is obvious that special matings for each sex followed indefinitely would necessitate the total loss of one sex or the other from each mating, for all exhibition purposes, and would virtually separate fancy breeding from utility breeding and thus sacrifice one of the most valuable attributes of the Minorca breed, which is the combination of fancy and utility qualities in the same individuals.

It is impossible to have breeding birds of any variety which are absolutely perfect in all sections. The object of breeding to a standard is to have an ideal for each section of the bird, so that by breeding as near as possible to that ideal the flock is kept more uniform than it could otherwise be. Therefore, when females are selected for a pen, care should be taken to select birds which are uniform in appearance, having similar faults since they must have faults, and excelling in the same points so that they can all be well mated by the same male. In selecting the male, care should be taken that he is specially strong in the points in which the females are weak, and that his weak points are balanced up with strong points in the females, always preferring the best that can be obtained in all sections of both sexes. The idea that like begets like is true to some extent, but the fact that every chick has two parents is just as true.

No chick can be exactly like both its parents except in the points where they are exactly like each other. Any fault which is common to both parents is sure to be exaggerated in some of the offspring, and the same is true of the tendencies to better type. The trained eye of the experienced breeder can take advantage of these things, while the inexperienced person is likely to be governed by some fad of his own imagination and may overlook some of the most valuable points in the birds which he rejects and fail to recognize some glaring defect in those which he most admires. For example, many people seem to have the idea that a good comb and lobes makes the Minorca, and the more fastidious of this class insist on what they consider absolute perfection in these two points, for which they are willing to sacrifice color or shape in any or all other sections. Others have such a horror of a crooked breast bone that they would discard, because of such a defect, the best bird in other respects they ever owned, when a common sense view of the case ought to convince anyone that the crooked breast bone was caused by injury to the bone when it was in a cartillaginous state and probably was the result of the bird roosting when too young. Such a defect being accidental could not be transmitted to the offspring by heredity. Color, size, carriage of tail, etc., have just as many devotees who, whether correct or incorrect in their prejudices, are unqualified to mate for best results until they learn to view the bird as an entirety and appreciate the good and the bad in every section. This applies not only to Minorcas, but to every standard variety of fowls. I have seen fine standard bred fowls of different varieties in the hands of people who gave them excellent care, but who allowed the progeny to deteriorate year after year, until they were mere scrubs for no other reason than the ignorance and prejudices of the person who mated the breeding stock. I have also seen quite inferior flocks of fowls, which had good lineage, bred up in two generations so well that some of the best prize winners in strong competition were produced from them.



R. C. BLACK MINORCA COCKEREL "DANDY."

Weight 7½ lbs. Winner of 1st at Philadelphia, 1902, and at Boston, 1902; bred, owned and exhibited by George H. Northup, Raceville, N. Y. More than one of the experts, when we inquired if any especially progressive birds seemed to stand out among the classes they had looked over, remarked, "Have you seen that fine Rose Comb Minorca cockerel?" He was a "star" among a group of good ones, with fine typical long Minorca body and unusual size, graceful carriage and elegance of finish in all sections. Truly he was a show bird all over, a splendid sample of this valuable new variety of Mr. Northup's well-known old strain of Minorcas.—*F. L. Sewell in Reliable Poultry Journal for April.*

THE TIME OF YEAR TO HATCH MINORCAS.

The best time for hatching is subject to so much variation by circumstances which differ according to the object which the breeder has in view, that there is no one time of year which is altogether better than any other. There are natural advantages to be profited by, and natural disadvantages to be overcome, no matter what the season of the year.

The very early spring hatching which has obtained favor with many people has the advantage of getting the young to their very best at the time of the early fall shows. Early chicks are certainly best for the early shows and are practically valuable because they are ready to begin laying when the earlier moulters of the old flock stop laying. But the earliest hatched chicks, especially the pullets, are apt to begin laying so early that they have passed their best condition, that is, their best show condition, before the winter shows begin, for the very reason that the temporary strain of early egg production has made it impossible for them to present the finest appearance that they would be capable of, under more favorable circumstances. I have seen too many excellent pullets beaten by really inferior birds which were in prime condition, just because the earlier ones had gone out of condition by prolonged laying.

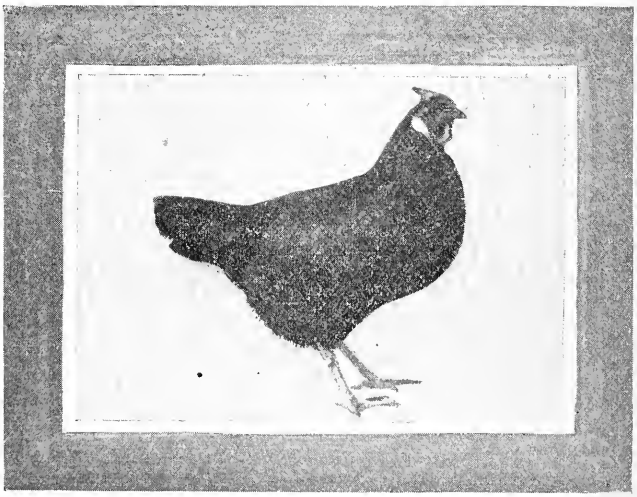
Other disadvantages are the difficulties which attend the rearing of chicks in the cold or damp weather of early spring. Natural conditions average better for hatching from the middle of April to the middle of May in our latitude (43° north) and vary according to climate in other localities. But Minorca pullets hatched in July will begin laying the following February if they are given good care, and I have had August-hatched Minorcas which began laying the following March. These July and August chicks, if given good care, make excellent show birds in their second year. Some of the

best cocks and hens I have seen in our largest shows have been from July hatches. I sold two Single Comb cocks in 1906 which were hatched in July, 1905, for $100.00 each. Major, the Rose Comb cock which won second for me at the St. Louis World's Fair, and first at Boston the following winter, was hatched in August. I refused an offer of $500.00 cash for him. These late hatched chicks are ready to begin laying early in spring or late winter when some of the winter layers are dropping out for a rest and they help to keep up a continual supply of eggs through the summer and fall. Therefore, while we find that conditions are not usually as favorable for hatching or rearing, very early or very late, the instances given prove conclusively that good results can be obtained from much later hatching than many people suppose.

It is not important whether Minorca chicks are hatched by hens or incubators, but when hatched it is very important that they receive good care.

HATCHING AND REARING MINORCA CHICKS.

The greatest success with any variety of fowls or animals reaches back for its good beginning to the production and care of the young. With parents well selected and wisely mated the young have much in their favor before they begin to live, but no matter how perfect the mating from which eggs for hatching are produced, nor how excellent the parent stock, the chicks need favorable conditions from the hatching time till they are fully matured to bring them to their best, and no doubt many chicks, which by nature are capable of being developed to the finest specimens, are rendered quite ordinary or even defective by conditions which are unfavorable during the process of development.



Rose Comb Black Minorca Hen Sold for $200.00. The highest price ever paid for a Hen. She has the long body and back which are so much sought in Minorcas.

Nature unhindered will do her best work. I almost said unhindered and **unaided** because the assistance which nature most requires is the removal of obstacles which impede her operations, suitable protection from extremes of heat and cold, and from birds and animals of prey and provision of nourishing food and pure water. All this, however, requires continual vigilance, and I would not be understood to say that the work of making all these natural conditions favorable is a small undertaking, because a great deal of work is required from the person who cares for a large flock of chickens and keeps all these conditions constantly favorable for the entire flock. The great principle of success, as I have already said, is to let nature do the work of development without hindrance. The protection which we provide to keep chickens away from vermin may seem to hinder nature by depriving chickens of full liberty, but we can give them all the advantage that absolute liberty provides by having their runs large enough for free exercise at all times of their life. Small runs are best for very small chicks, as by them they are allowed sufficient exercise and are protected from much which might befall them if they were allowed to stray far away from the brooder. Exposure to dampness by running in wet grass is a great cause of sickness in young chicks, and such a chill as small chicks will experience by too long absence from the brooder so weakens their constitution that comparatively few ever wholly recover from the effects of it.

Chicks kept in confinement even in large grassy runs are mainly dependent for sustenance and growth on food which is given them. Chicks which grow rapidly, as the Minorcas do, need a large amount of nourishment, but there is danger of over-feeding, therefore they need to be fed often when young, not less than five times daily, but should never be given as much as they are willing to eat at any one time except just before going to roost or into the brooder for night. One of the greatest causes of bowel trouble is over-eating, which comes of feeding too much at a time and waiting too long between times of feeding, so that the chicks be-

come very hungry and gorge themselves when they have an opportunity to eat or are so weak that they refuse food altogether. Over-feeding at the regular meals is different from the continual scratching and picking up food when running at large with the hen, in which case they continue to exercise vigorously while they eat and do not force such large quantities at once into their digestive organs and thus acquire indigestion and all its attendant evils. This exercise of hunting for food will be induced by feeding chicks sparingly at regular meals, and may be provided for when the natural source is insufficient, by scattering suitable seeds or cracked grain among the grass of their runs or in a scratching bed which can be easily provided.

Chicks which are brooded by a hen in coop should have a separate apartment for their feeding place to which the hen has no access. A variety of foods is better for chicks than too much of any one kind, and it is well to remember that young chicks need more of what is termed fattening food than adult fowls do, for it is on this class of foods that they depend to carry on the processes of life and growth and to sustain the necessary animal heat in the body. The smaller bodies of the young, having more exposed surface in proportion to their size and less power to withstand the effects of cold, need better provision for natural heat than the fully grown matured fowl. Right here let me call attention to the fact that next to over-feeding there is no greater cause of bowel trouble in chicks than getting chilled, which immediately causes lower vitality, weaker digestive ability and consequent indigestion so that the same result is arrived at by a different route.

Two grains which should always form a part of the food for young chicks are cracked corn and rice graded in size according to the size and age of the chicks. These two should comprise about one-half of their grain food. Rolled oats and cracked wheat in about equal quantities and one-fourth quantity of granulated milk, prepared for chick food, can be added for the other half and all thoroughly mixed together. I have found bread crumbs, cracker crumbs or shredded wheat biscuit slightly moist-

ened with milk or water and mixed with hard boiled eggs chopped fine an excellent soft food for one meal each day. Pure water, clean grit and charcoal should always be within the reach of chicks and fowls. Cleanliness of all their surroundings is highly essential.

As chicks get older they need not be fed so frequently and can be fed more at a time and coarser grain. After they are four weeks old begin giving them beef scrap and granulated milk in hoppers where it will keep clean and chicks can help themselves. They eat both with relish. The granulated milk is a comparatively new food for chickens and one which I find excellent for producing growth.

INFLUENCE OF COLOR-BREEDING ON COLOR OF EGGS.

The plumage color of Black Minorcas has been a subject of a great deal of anxiety on the part of Minorca fanciers, because at one time the particular kind of black was not regarded as nearly so important as it has been later. The purple tinge was undoubtedly most prevalent in the earlier Minorcas, but fanciers have come to prefer the green sheen and to breed for it. On this point I cannot do better than quote from my earlier book, "Minorcas, All Varieties": "The beautiful brilliant green which is so much sought can be and has been obtained by carefully breeding from such birds as show the most desirable color, but all of the best strains of Black Minorcas have a strong tendency to revert to the original purple, which appears mainly in what is termed rainbow barring. This barring is considered an objectonable feature in a strictly fancy bird, but these slight variations in tinge of plumage are much more easily controlled by the breeder than most of the fancy

points for which we breed, for it seems that the special care of birds during the periods of growth and moult has a very marked effect on the peculiar tints. It is not a new idea that color of plumage comes from the interior of the bird and I am convinced, by observation, that breeding for the green creates a tendency, in the hens so bred, to lay eggs with tinted shells, instead of the clear white shells which have been one of the leading characteristics of Black Minorcas. The only way I can account for this is that the green in plumage indicates an increase of yellow pigment, some of which, not unnaturally, is communicated to the shell of the egg. The purple tint shows a predominance of blue pigment, which, applied to the shell, only intensifies its whiteness, the same as the blue pigment used by the laundress increases the whiteness of linen. It is not an invariable rule that the peculiar tint of plumage is accompanied by a similar tint in the egg shells, but my attention has been called to the fact that such a tendency does exist, both by talks and correspondence I have had with other prominent Minorca breeders and by observing it in a few specimens of my own breeding. I approve, as a fancier, of breeding Minorcas for the greenish sheen because the prevailing popular taste and the Standard favor it, and because it is very beautiful. But we shall need at the same time to avoid too great a diminuition of black. It is not that less color is desirable, but that the metallic green tinge shall shine out from the apparently polished black surface of the plumage when in such a position that the greenish light can be reflected. The fact that, in another position, a purple reflection is seen, does not necessarily diminish the excellence of color, in fact, such is the color most desired, so that in whatever light it is seen the coloring is smooth and does not appear in barring."

I am still of the same opinion as when I wrote the above quotation, about nine years ago, but since that time a great deal has been accomplished in breeding Black Minorcas to the green sheen and at the same time avoiding other objectionable conditions which seemed to arise from such breeding.

We now have the Minorca well bred to the green sheen and I believe that my strain of Black Minorcas, Rose and Single Comb, lay eggs which are as uniform in size, color and shape as any strain of any variety of hens, and I have seen it demonstrated time and again that Black Minorcas are remarkable for the uniformity of their eggs. At the Madison Square Garden show last winter we had a striking demonstration of this. Including the breeding pens and display pens, I believe there were 108 Single Comb B. M. females, exhibited by 22 different breeders, birds which had been bred and selected for show purposes. I judged the class and therefore handled all except those in the display pens. I believe that from the fancier's standpoint they were the finest lot of show specimens that were ever brought together for competition. Many of these hens were laying and continued to lay through the show. I spent most of my time near their coops and did not see any except large white eggs in the Minorca coops. If I had seen any other I would have remembered it as I would any unusual sight. Besides, I heard many expressions of admiration for the large white eggs in the Minorca coops from people who were not accustomed to seeing Minorcas. But it is no indication of impure blood to see an occasional tinted egg from a variety of fowls which habitually lay white eggs, nor to see light colored eggs from a variety which habitually lay dark eggs. And I have noticed that eggs from the breeds which lay colored eggs vary more in shade of color than any Minorca eggs that I have ever seen, and any observing person who has given attention to the subject must have noticed the same. I have been called on to judge exhibits of eggs in which there were several plates from each of different American and Asiatic breeds, and no two plates from the same variety would be the same shade of color. I have also seen pure white eggs which were laid by pure bred Plymouth Rocks and pure bred Wyandotte hens and very light colored eggs which were laid by pure Langshan hens. I have bred 22 varieties of standard fowls at different times during the thirty years that I have been actively interested in poultry, have made a

specialty of Black Minorcas for twenty years, and have been judging all varieties for more than twenty years, consequently have kept in touch with other breeds as well as Minorcas, and think my knowledge of their characteristics is quite accurate. Another peculiarity which I have noticed is, that bringing two entirely differently bred strains together appears occasionally to interrupt the true breeding to color of plumage and color of eggs, but the second year of judicious mating usually overcomes it. I do not know why this happens; perhaps it comes from the two different strains of blood warring for supremacy, or from some elements in the two having greater or less affinity for each other. But I have never heard a fully satisfactory explanation.

COLOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF COLOR IN BLACK MINORCAS.

It is a source of surprise to people who are not fully acquainted with Black Minorcas to observe the color of the chicks when they are first hatched. The Standard describes Black Minorcas as having black plumage throughout, but when the little chicks first emerge from the shell most of them show a great deal of white on head, wings and breast. Only occasionally one is wholly black when hatched, and they are as likely as any to have poor color at maturity. This down is followed in the first feathering by a varied mixture of black and white feathers, more white appearing in the plumage of some chicks than in others. When they have grown to the weight of about two pounds each, the flock appears to be uniform black in color as they run about the yard, but taken in the hand and examined closely, there is still some white to be found in the wings of

some of them. This peculiarity is perfectly natural and we find it in the very best strains of Black Minorcas. It is just as natural for them to take on fully black plumage when they approach maturity, but this, like any other feature of development, depends, next after heredity, on the nutrition which they derive from the food they eat and the air they breathe. It is very noticeable that chicks which have abundance of clean, pure water, fresh air and nourishing food develop steadily and perfectly, while those which are confined in coops too small, poorly ventilated, and consequently filthy, neither grow well or perfectly, and they soon get in such a condition that good food is only partially available to them because their system is too much weakened to assimilate it properly, hence their development is limited and imperfect. This is as plainly seen in plumage color as it is in size or shape, because if the processes of breathing, digestion and circulation are insufficient so that the elements of nutrition are not perfectly assimilated and carried freely to the different parts of the body, color pigment is not acquired in sufficient quantities, nor is it freely conveyed to the feathers, or the failure of some organs to perform their functions steadily, causes unevenness of color and lack of color in proportion to the lack or the irregularity of these vital forces. Where the conditions have been most unfavorable we find the most white and gray feathers in the plumage of Black Minorcas, provided that all which come under comparison are pure blooded and equally well bred. Of course it is not possible to secure absolutely perfect conditions at all times for an entire flock, nor is it possible to make the best conditions perfectly uniform at all times, therefore we must still have some imperfections which are due to the causes mentioned, but I am certain that the purple barring in the plumage of Black Minorcas can be almost, if not entirely, done away with by breeding from good stock properly mated, and keeping them always at their best by providing always the best of care and food to promote constant development.

I once had a striking example of this when I hired two different persons to rear chicks for me from eggs

produced from a very fine pen of Black Minorcas. As both had eggs from the same pen, there should have been no great difference in the quality of the chicks, especially in points like color controlled by heredity. There is no doubt but heredity does control all points to a great extent, but the following shows how the course of nature can be perverted after the chicks are hatched and while they are growing. In the instance referred to I gave one person one hundred eggs, the other only twenty-six. The twenty-six eggs were set about ten days later than the one hundred. All the eggs hatched very well, but the chicks in the larger flock soon began dying off from lack of care, till only twenty-seven of them were left alive. Some were accidentally killed from the smaller flock, but they were well cared for, and at four months old twelve fine chicks were brought to me as the product of the twenty-six eggs. Of these twelve the pullets averaged in weight about four pounds each, and the cockerels weighed from four to five and one-half pounds each. The twenty-seven chicks which I received at the same age, four months, did not average more than three pounds each, cockerels and pullets together. This lot had their tails and wing feathers broken and mussed from being crowded in small quarters to roost, with a large flock of old fowls, and were dwarfed every way from lack of nourishment. I gave both flocks the best of care after they were brought home. The twelve which had received good care while young kept on developing and made large, strong birds, several of them prize winners, and not one of that flock had feathers other than black when matured. None of the other flock grew to the usual size and most of them had dull colored plumage, and very many of them had gray feathers in wings and tail; in fact, I had more off-color in those twenty-seven chicks than I ever had in a flock of one hundred chicks before or since. The impoverished condition of their systems made them unable to produce sufficient coloring matter for their feathers, and the time had passed when the perfect development of their bodies was possible. In other words they had matured before development was completed. No

one could have thought that the two flocks were produced from the same pen, but such was the case and it shows the importance of keeping chicks steadily growing from the time they leave the shell till they are fully matured.

Really, it is the same with birds and animals that it is in vegetable life. How often we see a field of corn all from the same variety and all planted the same day, most of which is large and thrifty and of intense dark green color, producing large, fully developed ears, and in the midst of this luxuriant growth an occasional row or two of small yellow stunted stalks, having leaves, tassels and ears, but all of such inferior size and color that the ordinary observer would hardly believe it to be the same variety of grain. The experienced agriculturist would know at a glance that the poorer plants had been insufficiently nourished by growing on ground which had been impoverished in some way, most usually by having two furrows turned away from each other, forming what is called a dead furrow. So much for variations which can be overcome by good care and favorable surroundings.

But I am perfectly certain that while we can accomplish general good results by the various lines of mating and breeding which observation and experience teach us to follow, we shall still find some variations in form and color which cannot be fully accounted for as long as living creatures, animals or birds are the objects of our work. Among the peculiarities in plumage color I have noticed that bringing two well bred strains of the same breed together, in the breeding pen, in some cases seem to produce variations in the plumage color of the offspring, for instance, two strains of Black Minorcas bred to fine green sheen by different breeders, mated together, sometimes produce entirely unexpected results in chicks, at least not nearly the usual percentage of their produce come up to the excellence of the parents. In some such cases the males have red feathers in hackels, wings and saddles which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, but suggest that the two lines of breeding, which brought similar results in the parent

strain, opposed each other, or carried the offspring beyond the standard mark. A variation which is harder to account for and therefore more difficult to correct is that occasionally feathers change in color after being fully grown and perfectly colored. The organ which produces coloring matter for the feather may for some reason have ceased to perform its function, probably from external injury in some cases and from disease of the organ in others.

A young hen which I imported from England was taken with convulsions. She would throw herself on her back and twist her head around, flap her wings and continued in a very bad condition for several weeks. Gradually she regained her usual health to all appearances, but several of the feathers in each wing had turned white, but when she moulted again her feathers all came in black. Another case was a Brown Leghorn cockerel in a fine flock of that variety, from which I was engaged by the owner to select the finest specimens for a show at which he wished to exhibit. The cockerel referred to was among those which I selected, and he won first prize in strong competition, under one of our most competent judges. The following February I was again engaged to select and mate several breeding pens for the same gentleman to breed from the coming season. I selected the same cockerel to head a pen of Brown Leghorns and he was then in excellent color throughout. The following June, having business in the town where these birds were kept, I called on the owner again and was surprised that one of the long sickle feathers in the tail of the Brown Leghorn cockerel which I had so much admired was now nearly all white. I was told that it begun at the end farthest from the body, and had gradually changed till it was now as I saw it. The owner said that if he had bought that cockerel he would have thought that feather had been colored before he received the bird and the color had faded or washed off, but as he had raised the bird he knew that the change of color was wholly a freak of nature or the result of some unknown cause.

Two still more remarkable cases were two fully ma-

tured cocks which I had special reason to observe closely, as I was breeding from the first for a special purpose, and the other was a bird which I was counting on to win honors in the winter shows, so I know there is no mistake about the unusual freak which I noticed in each of them, viz: both had moulted perfectly black throughout and plumage color was a strong point in each. One was a bird which I put in a breeding pen the latter part of February. In April I noticed a narrow white bar across one of his tail feathers. This bar continued to increase until it was about two inches long. Then it began to decrease until it had entirely disappeared and the feather was all black again before the fall. The other was my Rose Comb Cock, Dash, who was considered by all judges one of the finest colored Black Minorcas they had ever seen. He was hatched in July, 1896, and he won second in Madison Square Garden in 1898, and won second again in 1899 at the same show. The following fall he moulted in the very finest color of plumage throughout, intense green black, but after I had put him in a pen to prepare him for Madison Square Garden show I was dismayed, one day in December, on taking him in my hand to find a flight feather in one of his wings, the end of which was tipped with about two inches of pure white. I thought, of course, I could not show him, but in a few days I noticed that the feather was coming back to its original color without any treatment whatever, and before show time it was perfectly black again. In less than a month from the time I first noticed the white I showed the bird at Madison Square Garden, where he won first this time. Two years later, 1902, he won second at Philadelphia and second at Boston, and the year following that, when in his seventh year, he won third at Boston and was greatly admired for the brilliancy of his plumage. Why that feather changed from black to white and then back from white to black in a period of about six weeks I do not know. I have seen and heard of other similar cases, but none of them have been satisfactorily explained.

Anything which injures a pin-feather is likely to so

disturb the coloring process that the feather, when grown, will be imperfectly colored, that is, a naturally high colored feather may, from such a cause, be white or partly white when fully grown. For this reason every precaution should be taken to avoid fighting and all disturbances among the flocks at the moulting period and special care should be taken to nourish fowls well at that time.

FITTING MINORCAS FOR THE SHOW-ROOM.

Preparation for success in showing ought to include a retrospective view of the ancestry of the birds on which success or failure is to depend. A strong pedigree, showing generation after generation of ancestors which were excellent in all that is desirable, is worth more than all the temporary fitting and grooming that can possibly be crowded into the last few weeks before show time. All that has been said about caring well for chicks through all stages of their development forms an important part of fitting them for show. Careful protection and good nourishment through their moulting period is very important, for a fowl cannot produce fine feathers from an impoverished body, and the process of producing feathers at all is certain to be detrimental in other ways unless there is ample provision for the new growth.

A while before show time it is a good plan to separate the birds intended for show, in separate pens, to avoid the danger of the breaking of feathers and injuring of combs by other fowls. Thus penned separately, the attendant can see that each bird has a suitable allowance and is not over-fed and can get the birds accustomed to being handled so they will not be timid when placed in the show coops. It is desirable to have the

birds full of vigor and abundantly nourished at show time so that they can endure without drooping the inevitable strain of being closely confined, the journey to and from the shows, the brilliantly lighted show-room, through the long evenings, when it is fowl nature to repose in darkness, and the constant passing of people before their coops; but in trying to feed a fowl well we must take great care not to over-feed, especially when fowls which have been accustomed to free range are deprived of their usual opportunity to exercise.

It improves the appearance of White Minorcas to wash them thoroughly, but the plumage of Black Minorcas should never be washed. They ought always to be kept clean by keeping their houses and runs clean and giving them plenty of clean litter. If their plumage looks soiled or dusty a sponge or cloth dampened in clear water and rubbed the smooth way of the feathers so as not to rumple the feathers or disconnect the web, is the best way to clean them. I have seen the appearance of glossy black feathers very much injured by the use of soap and water. Feathers which have been mussed can be much improved by placing on a smooth surface and smoothing the web back into place with the fingers.

Lice are always pernicious destroyers of health and beauty of fowls and ought not to be tolerated at any time of a fowl's life. Especial vigilance ought to be exercised in regard to them and all kinds of vermin among birds which have been selected for show.

Sunflower seed, hemp seed, flax seed and oil meal, fed in small quantities, gives gloss to plumage and can be thus used to good advantage for a few weeks before show time.

Long exposure to sun and wind immediately after fowls have been accustomed to confinement in buildings sometimes causes the delicate skin to chap and peel and because of this the delicate white lobe sometimes becomes streaked with red and irretrievably ruined. I mention these dangers because it is in avoiding them that much of the successful fitting for show consists.

Combs of male birds which begin to weaken and bend

or lop can be strengthened by wire braces fitted to the comb so as to hold it erect and straight. The side toward which the comb bends should be slightly oiled with vaseline and rubbed thoroughly several times daily to increase circulation of blood on that side of the comb. This ought to be done as soon as the comb begins to bend, because after it has been bent longer it becomes more confirmed in that shape and there is greater difficulty in restoring it to the natural position. One successful exhibitor told me that he believed cocks caused their large combs to lean to one side by habitually holding their head under the wing on the same side when roosting at night, thus causing comb to fall to one side, and he said he corrected the fault by sprinkling cayenne pepper in the feathers on the side where he found each particular cock's head at night, thus causing a change in the habitual position, with the result that combs became erect again.

The combs and wattles of hens can also be improved by manipulaton with the fingers if combs do not have the proper loop or fall gracefully over the head or if wattles have wrinkles or folds.

As soon as fowls are selected the legs should be examined, and if there is any appearance of scales or roughness they should be thoroughly rubbed with vaseline and afterwards kept clean. But in using any kind of oil on combs, faces or legs great care should be taken that no oil is allowed to touch the feathers, as it will injure them more than it will improve unfeathered portions unless great care is exercised.

A good tonic to give fowls in the drinking water is made as follows: Mix two gallons of water, one gill sulphuric acid, one-half ounce sulphate of quinine, four ounces cayenne pepper and one pound sulphate of iron. This must be kept in a bottle or jug and should be thoroughly shaken every time it is used. One tablespoonful should be thoroughly mixed with two quarts of drinking water. Just before putting the birds in the show pen their combs, faces, lobes, wattles and feet should be thoroughly washed and dried.

Before closing let me call your attention again to

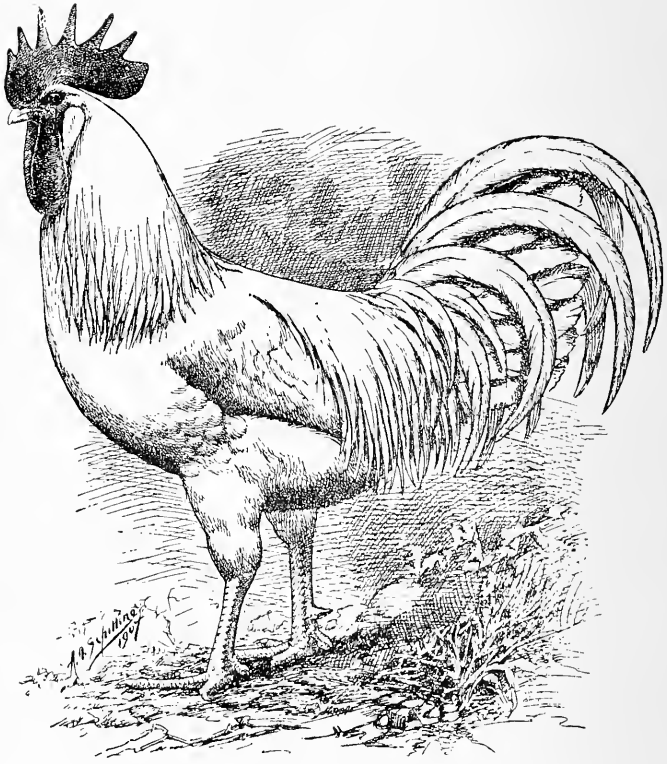
the chapter on color development in which there is much which is very essential to successful exhibiting.

Remember the best care cannot correct the faults of poor breeding or hereditary deficiencies, but the best bred Minorcas of the finest type, if neglected or badly managed, may be defeated in the show by an inferior bird which has had better care.

HISTORY OF SINGLE COMB WHITE MINORCAS.

The history of White Minorcas probably extends back much farther than my knowledge of them. I know that they were being bred in England about thirty years ago and the particular strain that I know of came from sports of the Black Minorcas. They were said to be like the Black Minorcas of England at that time, except in color, and were considered equal to the Blacks for practical purposes. But they were not so much bred in England as the Blacks and the reason ascribed for this was that breeders found it more difficult to care for them properly and keep them looking clean in their small runs and smoky atmosphere.

White Minorcas were first brought to America by Francis Mortimer of Pottsville, Pa., in 1885 and 1886, and they were bred and advertised by him quite extensively for a short tme. They were also bred in the Niagara Poultry Yards about that time. C. R. De Hart took them up soon after they were first imported to America and became one of the leading breeders of them. Later, he sold his entire stock to C. W. Jerome & Company, who for years were the leading breeders and exhibitors of this variety, winning many important prizes in Madison Square Garden and other leading shows. The Jerome White Minorcas are now owned by



Single Comb White Minorca Cock.

From Poultry Advocate.

Mr. William Glasgow, whose late wife was a member of the firm of C. W. Jerome & Company, and well known as a very estimable lady and a true fancier.

It is gratifying to see that quite a number of new fanciers are taking up White Minorcas now and are putting much enthusiasm and skill into the work of breeding them up to their best. I know they will find that they have a good foundation to build on, in a breed which has had its best qualities well preserved, and I am perfectly sure of grand success for those who persist in keeping them at the front, because of the confidence I have in the genuine Minorca, to take and hold the high place which is its inherent right.

SINGLE COMB WHITE MINORCAS.

This is an excellent variety of fowls which I am sure would be much more bred if their good qualities were better known. Everything which has been said in the foregoing chapters of this book of the characteristics of Black Minorcas applies equally well to White Minorcas, except the advantages which I believe accompany or are derived from the black plumage. Black plumage affords a warmer covering and is generally supposed to indicate greater power of endurance and vigor than plumage of any other color. The standard weights of White Minorcas are 8 pounds for cock, 6½ pounds for hen, 6½ pounds for cockerel, and 5½ pounds for pullet, which is one pound per bird lighter than for the Single Comb Black, but I have seen many White Minorcas in the show room which were equal in weight to the standard requirements for the Blacks. The plumage and beaks of White Minorcas are white and legs pinkish white. Their owners always speak of them

in the highest terms of praise as excellent in all points of usefulness and a very satisfactory variety to breed. I have noticed that breeders who have once taken them up have bred them for many years and I am quite sure that if breeders would make it a point to produce more of them and advertise them thoroughly so as to call attention to their good qualities the White Minorcas would find much greater popularity than they have ever enjoyed. There are a very great number of poultry-loving people who are so prejudiced in favor of White fowls that they can see no beauty in any other color and for them to be made acquainted with the intrinsic value of such a variety of fowls as White Minorcas is to open up a market which will tax every breeder of that variety to his utmost capacity to supply it, only to see that more and more are needed faster than the number can be increased. Truly White Minorcas' interests have suffered more from lack of competition among the breeders than from any other cause.

Some very excellent fanciers have bred White Minorcas and some of them are still interested in them, so it is not necessary to look to any other country to get better stock than can be had here in America. The quality of our White Minorcas is good, but they are deficient in numbers. Hence I believe their destiny lies in the hands of those who are now breeding them.

ROSE COMB WHITE MINORCAS.

This variety is really in its infancy now, not yet admitted to the Standard. A few specimens have been shown from time to time for a few years, but it has been seldom that more than one or two have been seen on exhibition at the same time, and most of them have

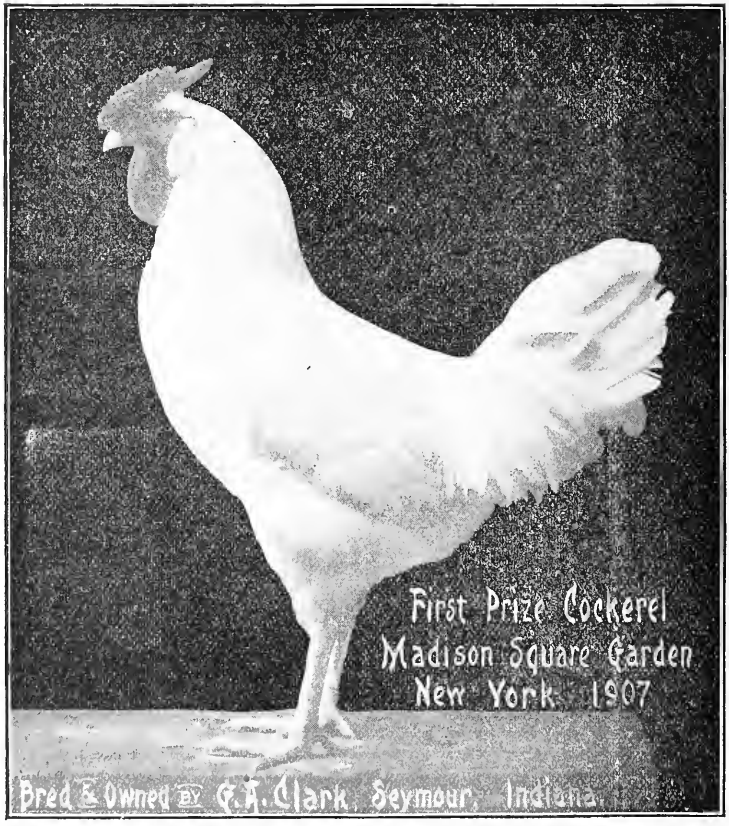
shown unmistakable evidence of other than pure Minorca blood. During the last two years I have seen a marked improvement in the specimens which have been exhibited.

G. A. Clark of Seymour, Ind., breeds more Rose Comb White Minorcas than anyone else I know, and has shown some of the very best specimens which it has been my pleasure to handle in the shows, where I have judged. Knowing him to be a true fancier and a man whose statements can be depended on, I have asked him to write an article on Rose Comb White Minorcas for this book. He has done so in an interesting and instructive way, which I am sure readers will appreciate. Mr. Clark has also kindly loaned me a cut of a fine Rose Comb White Minorca cockerel which appears in this book.

ROSE COMB WHITE MINORCAS.

BY G. A. CLARK, SEYMOUR, IND.

My first experience with the Rose Comb White Minorcas was the purchase of a pen of birds from a party who claimed they were bred from sports of the Rose Comb Black Minorcas. They were not very good specimens, but fair in several points. The first chicks I raised from this pen were mixed up in shape and color and comb pretty bad, as the progeny of any new variety would have been, and among them I was able to select only one cockerel and one pullet that was good. The cockerel was a nice white in color, good comb and size. This cockerel I mated with two single comb White Minorca hens. These two hens were selected for excellence in all points except comb. The result of this mating was tolerably good and from the chicks I got one cock-



Rose Comb White Minorca Cockerel.

Compliments of G. A. CLARK.

erel that was satisfactory. This cockerel I mated with the good pullet above referred to, but now a hen. This mating produced some chicks, good in both comb and color and shape. The original pen that I had bought I disposed of, as they produced a majority of stock small and off in color. They also laid an egg much smaller than the regular Minorca egg.

From the two matings I now had I selected the best for breeders and along these two lines I am still breeding them with results that are satisfactory. From 104 pedigreed chicks this year only eight were culled out for defects, and the defective points were single combs and black feathers. From the remaining youngsters I will be able to select some good breeders, as they are now of good size and look extra promising.

I might mention that I dipped again into the Single Comb White Minorca blood by a mating of two hens to a Rose Comb White Minorca cockerel for a special purpose. This blood will not be infused into the other stock until the desired results are accomplished and probably not then if the first strain produce what we want by the careful selection and mating we are using.

Our best hens now lay an egg very good in size and a nice white shell.

As to weight, we have one male weighing eight pounds and one hen nearly eight. These are the largest two specimens we have. Several others are good and compare favorably with the usual lot of Minorcas.

The most difficult work in obtaining this new variety has been accomplished. The pure white lobes, red eyes, white legs and beaks are firmly established in them. This year will see rapid advancement towards their perfection and the people who want a white fowl that lays a large white egg and lots of them will find the very fowl to suit their fancy in this last addition to the Minorcas—the ROSE COMB WHITE MINORCAS.

BUFF MINORCAS MOTTLED MINORCAS AND BARRED MINORCAS.

The latest varieties of Minorcas which have been spoken of are "Buff" "Mottled" and "Barred." I cannot say that they are varieties because as such they have not hatched yet. When it can be said that such varieties of Minorcas actually do exist they will need many years of brooding before they can be depended on to breed true to the characteristics of genuine. The mottled variety is being produced by crossing Black Minorcas and White Minorcas together. No doubt such a variety can be produced in that way if the man who has undertaken it is adapted to the work and has patience to pursue it for the many years that will be necessary to establish a uniform type in the mottled coloring, and preserve the natural excellence and the true Minorca type in size and shape. Cross-breeding with other varieties cannot be tolerated by any true Minorca fancier. Its effect will be just as lasting as the variety which is produced by it. Of Buff Minorcas all that I can say of them from personal observation is that they are falsely named, counterfeits and can safely be "let alone."

The only Barred Minorcas I ever saw were the result of a mixture of Barred Plymouth Rocks, Scotch Grays and Black Minorcas. Of course they were a mongrel flock. They had fairly good Minorca heads, smutty gray plumage, with irregular barring and there was great variation in shape. They laid eggs of all shades of color from white to dark brown. If the demand for Plymouth Rocks or Scotch Grays had been such as to have made either of them as profitable to sell as Minorcas, undoubtedly these fowls would have been called either Lop-combed White Eared Rocks or White Eared Lop-combed Grays. Either name certainly would have been as suitable as Barred Minorcas.

Recently I have received information from different sources that there has been an attempt made in Germany to

create Barred Minorcas, but I have not seen any specimen of this foreign product. Though I understand that a few have been brought to our Pacific Coast. I hope the breeder who has taken up this new variety in America will control his product until he is sure that his Barred Minorcas will be a credit to the name they bear.

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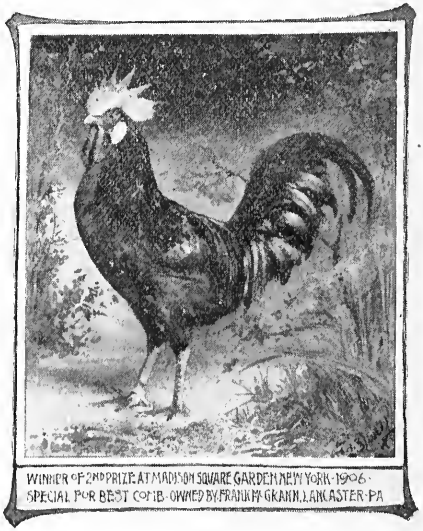

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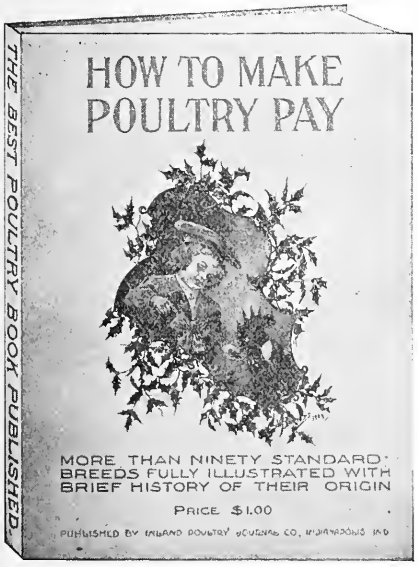
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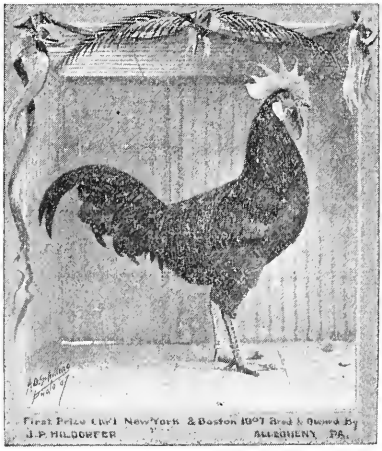

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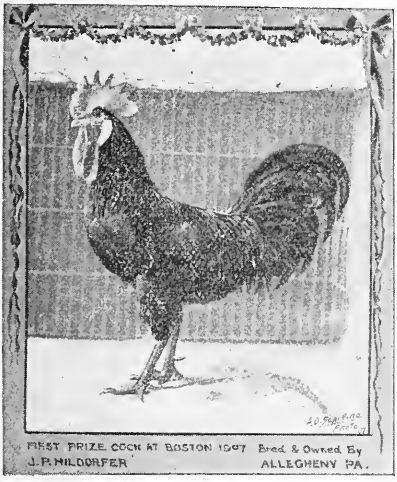

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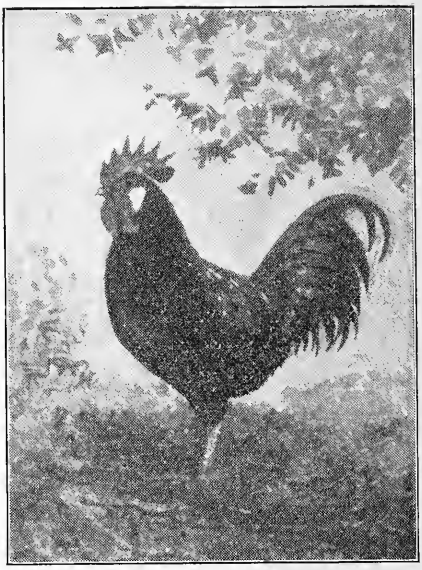
just like this cut, or eggs that will produce such and prompt attention to your order, write



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My winnings for 1907 are:

AT NEW YORK—3rd cock, 1st cockerel, 1st pullet.
AT POUGHKEEPSIE—1st cock, 1st and 2nd ckl, 1st and 2nd pullet, 1st pen.
AT PHILMONT—1st cock, 1st hen, 2nd ckl, 1st Pullet.
AT SCHENECTADY—1st cock, 1st hen : 1st, 2nd, 3rd ckl, 1st and 2nd pullet.
Eggs for hatching, $5 per 13. Stock according to quality.

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are the true type that win the prizes. My being a new breeder is no reason my Minorcas are not up-to-date. In getting my start I got the best money could buy, and have won prizes wherever shown. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd cockerel, 1st, 2nd and 3rd pullet. 1st pen at Illinois State fair, 2nd ckl. and 2nd pullet at Elgin, Ill., 1st ckl at State Poultry Show at Macomb, Ill. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th at Winchester. Birds always for sale at reasonable prices, quality considered. Eggs in season, also breed high class White Plymouth Rock of the Root's Canedy, and Shaw strains. I guaranteed 10 fertile eggs out of a setting of 15 eggs.

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Have been bred and exhibited at leading shows by me the past fourteen years. They are grand in size and color.

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20 Regular and Special Prizes, including 5 Silver Cups, for best collection. Our Minorcas were considered by the best Minorca experts, the finest collection at the Garden. They won with Green Goods. Do not fail to write us for your wants. Satisfaction guaranteed. Eggs in season.

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Eggs for sitting in 1908, 3, 5, 10 dollars per 13.

Stock for sale at reasonable prices. Satisfaction guaranteed

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PURE NORTHUP STRAIN

have proved that they can win the best prizes at the largest shows and in the strongest of competition. Trapnests used, and special attention paid to egg production. Every chick is pedigreed. Send for my circular which tells the "whole story" and you will want some of the blood of Togo, the $200 cock, in your birds. Let me know your wants before buying elsewhere. Raising Minorcas is a business, not a side line, with me.

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Northup's direct. Winners at all the National Shows. Stock and eggs for sale at all times.

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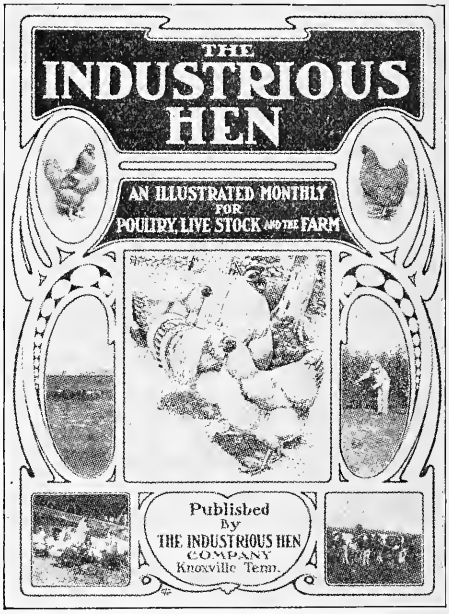

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Articles on this breed for the past year, many of which have been worth ten times the cost of the magazine, have been read by hundreds of thousands of people.

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Equal to the Best. Prices Reasonable. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

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It has 43.3 per cent Albuminoid Protein.

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GEORGE L. ALBEN,

102 So. Main St., Adrian, Mich.

AUTHOR'S CORRECTIONS.

Cut of Headlight III which appears on page 31 should have been credited to "Poultry," an English Journal published in London, and the Ideal cock and the Ideal hen to the American Black Minorca Club. The omissions were unintentional and were not noticed until after the reading pages and illustrations were all printed.

BREEDERS' DIRECTORY.

Breeders of Single Comb Black Minorcas.

J. Norman Bowen, R. F. D. 3, Manchester, Va.

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Breeders of Rose Comb Black Minorcas.

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A. E. Wilson, Guilderland, N. Y.

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Are Known the World Over

To Stand at the Head

They cackle and crow in the yards of our customers who are leading fanciers throughout the United States, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Prince Edwards Island, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, Vancouvers Island, Mexico, Republic of Columbia, Brazil, Bermuda, Denmark, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Trinidad Island, Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Java and Japan, and are giving the best of satisfaction everywhere as egg producers and prize winners.

NORTHUP'S MINORCA FARM

is devoted exclusively to

Single and Rose Comb Minorcas

and is one of the largest poultry establishments in the world. More than fifteen acres of land is divided into runs for the breeding stock. The buildings contain 18820 square feet of floor space beside twenty-five colony houses.

We make a specialty of breeding show birds for sale and selling eggs from which such can be hatched. Our large catalogue contains pictures and descriptions of our buildings and birds and much information about Minorcas which cannot be obtained elsewhere. The catalogue is free but is worth much more than the stamps required to send it. Write your wants to

GEO. H. NORTHUP & SON,

RACEVILLE, WASH. CO., N. Y.

IMPORTANT

Having purchased all rights to Geo. H. Northup's Egg Food Recipe, am offering the Recipe for sale at $1.00 per copy, on same terms as Mr. Northup formerly sold it. Send all orders to GEO. W. HEY, Raceville, Wash. Co., N. Y.

Recipe for Northup's Egg=Food.

This food has been on the market for twenty years and has given general satisfaction to those who have used it throughout the United States and Canada. The same people have bought it year after year because it has proven to be the most profitable egg-producing food they have found, by keeping their hens laying all winter when eggs were high, and when this food has been given breeding fowls, their eggs have shown better fertility and chicks hatched from them have been more hardy.

IT HAS KEPT YOUNG CHICKS FREE FROM GAPS AND CHOLERA AND CURED MANY CASES OF BOTH. It is one of the best preventives of catarrh and roup known because by keeping fowls in a healthy condition it enables them to resist diseases. It hastens the growth of feathers during moult.

MANY OF OUR BEST FANCIERS FEED IT TO FOWLS WHEN FITTING THEM FOR SHOW because it produces a fine gloss in plumage and imparts the bright color to comb, wattles and faces which indicates vigorous health and helps many birds to score several points higher than they would do without such a tonic.

This food has found ready sale at 25c per lb or $1.00 for 5 lbs. to people in all parts of the United States and Canada who have had it sent to them by express or freight thus entailing additional expense for transportation, and many poultrymen have bought it in 100 lb. lots year after year.

My business in Black Minorca fowls has so greatly increased that all of my time is required for the part of that business which I do personally, and to relieve myself of the work of superintending the manufacture, sale, and shipment of egg-food, I have decided to discontinue making the food for sale, and by selling the recipe for making it will give others an opportunity to obtain it at much less expense. I am well aware that by so doing I sacrifice a large profit which I have derived from sale of the food, but having all I can do without it I consider this plan advantageous to myself as well as to my customers.

THE EGG-FOOD CAN BE MADE FOR 7c OR 8c PER LB. IN 100 LB. LOTS according to the local price for ingredients. Anyone who desires can do a good and profitable business in making and selling it in their own town because it is an

old established food, and the results of its use will create additional demand for it in any locality where poultry is kept in large or small flocks.

IN SELLING THIS RECIPE I GIVE THE BUYER PERMISSION TO MAKE AND SELL THE FOOD, but all are restricted from copying the recipe to give away or sell as the recipe is copyrighted.

I am giving on the following pages a few of the many testimonials I have, to show what results the food has produced for those who have bought it from me.

Recipe with full directions for making and use $1.00.

Only two tablespoonfuls of egg-food is required for every quart of grain food.

TESTIMONIALS.

INCREASES EGG YIELD.

Geo. H. Northup, Dear Sir:—You ask me for my experience in the use of your Egg Food. I can give you an accurate statement, as I keep a daily account with my hens. From this account I quote a few items, as follows:

March 10, commenced to use Northup's Egg Food.

Week ending March	16,	received	. . . . .	10 eggs.
" "	23,	"	. . . . .	50 "
" "	30,	"	. . . . .	75 "
" April	6,	"	. . . . .	86 "
" "	13,	"	. . . . .	90 "

April 13, stopped using Egg Food, and supply of eggs steadily decreased until the week ending July 28, received 17 eggs. July 28, recommenced using N.'s Egg Food. Week ending August 3, received 47 eggs. Acc't goes on to show steady increase of eggs as long as Egg Food was used, and a decrease as soon as I stopped feeding it. When in March I first commenced using Egg Food, my hens were sickly and in poor condition, and I had received only five eggs during the three months previous.

Yours truly, EDWIN STARKS.

TAMAQUA, Pa.

Mr. Geo. H. Northup, Dear Sir:—Yours just received. Yes, I had 50 lbs. of your Egg Food last winter and found it to be an excellent article. I gave some of it to some friends of mine, and one of them has told me that it is the best egg food he ever used and improved the lay of his hens one half more in one month. I have been recommending it to my friends. You may use my name in your circular if you wish to. Very respectfully, F. SOWERS.

SARATOGA, Cal.

About the Egg Food. I was very much pleased with it, and wish I could procure more. Have you an agent on this coast? The expressage is so high that I can hardly afford to send so far, but if you do have an agent on this coast please let me know. Besides its great egg-producing qualities it is excellent to keep the hens healthy.

Yours, GEO. H. FOSTER.

READING, Pa.

Mr. Geo. H. Northup, Dear Sir:—In reply to your letter, at hand, will say that I cannot speak too highly of your Egg Food, both in producing eggs and keeping fowls in good condition. When I commenced feeding it, the first Saturday after the Reading show, not one of my pullets was laying. Since then I am feeding your food and am getting 8 or 9 eggs a day from 15 hens and pullets. Although my birds are too fat, weigh from 7½ to 9½ lbs., not exercise enough. I cannot recommend your "Egg Food" too highly to all that have fowls. I need more soon.

Yours, etc., M. B. SNYDER.

ALGONQUIN, Ill.

Mr. Geo. H. Northup, Dear Sir:—I received the Egg Food in good shape. I thank you very much for putting in the extra pound. Now I have fed it for over three weeks to five hens and one cock. I fed them corn and oatmeal mixed with bran, in boiling milk, and only put in one tablespoonful of the Egg Food to each quart of meal, and fed corn and oats mixed at night and from those five hens I can show 100 eggs in 22 days. I have not hatched any of them yet so cannot tell how fertile they are, but I know to produce eggs that "Northup's Egg Food" can't be beat. Now you can see from my hens that it is good, for it must have been the "Egg Food" which made them lay, for I had fed them the very same feed before I got the Egg Food and they did not lay at all, but by just adding a little of your Egg Food to the feed it made the eggs come. You asked me to be your agent, but I was then undecided what to do, but now I am so well pleased with it, you can send me 100 lbs., for I am sure I can sell it.

ROBBIE E. HAGER.

HAMPTON, N. Y.

Geo. H. Northup, Dear Sir:—I bought a two lb. package of your Egg Food, and commenced feeding it to my hens. We had not got an egg from them in a long time, but they commenced to lay soon after I commenced feeding it, and continued to lay well until the food was gone, then they stopped and did not lay any more until I got another package, some four weeks after, then they commenced laying again as soon as I commenced to feed it and laid wonderfully well as long as I fed it to them, and the eggs decreased as soon as I stopped feeding it. I consider it a valuable egg producer. Yours truly,

GEO. W. WARD.

TRUTHVILLE, N. Y.

GEO. H. NORTHUP, Raceville, N. Y.

Dear Sir: I have used your "Eggfood" during the past winter with very satisfactory results. There was a marked increase in eggs as soon as I commenced using it, and a falling off when I discontinued it. I consider it a very profitable food, and shall use a larger quantity next winter. Yours truly, FAY. WILBUR.

RECIPE FOR SALE, SEE PAGE 102.